

# THE SECRETS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE

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BY

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TO THE GREAT NUMBER OF  
THE READERS OF  
"THE YOUNG MAN"  
WHO HAVE ENCOURAGED ME WITH WORDS  
OF CHEER  
SINCE TAKING THE EDITOR'S CHAIR  
I  
WITH THE WARMEST AND BEST WISHES  
TO THEM ALL  
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK



## PREFACE

BEFORE allowing this book to take what I hope will be a long and prosperous voyage on the sea of Time, I decided to ask men of standing and authority to give me their opinion of it; and my first duty is to thank them for their great kindness. I can hardly feel I merit their generous praise. My only reason for quoting their opinions of the book is to justify my decision to issue it.

*Dr. John Clifford* writes: "It has five things to commend it: (1) It will be read. (2) Its teaching will be remembered. (3) Its impact on the intelligence and will is sure to be felt and welcomed. (4) It guides to the right paths, and aids the pilgrim to walk therein. (5) It will create high hope and strong endeavour."

*Mr. Gordon Selfridge's* opinion was coveted by me and I had the pleasure of receiving it. Mr. Selfridge says: "I should be glad to see it read by as great a number of young men as possible. It is all in the right direction, and free from anything pedantic. I wish it much success."

I owe a debt of gratitude to many Church of England preachers, but especially to the Rev. H. W. Webb-Peploe. I love and reverence Dr. Clifford, and

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# THE SECRETS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE

## CHAPTER I

### YOU CAN SUCCEED

As the Editor of *The Young Man* I have exceptional opportunities of understanding the young men of Britain—their sins, mistakes, aims, and aspirations—and I go straight to the one thing I want to say—which is this: *you can succeed in life*, and succeed, not only in making a competence but in doing the highest and best work, and in forming a noble and manly character, without which life ends in failure whatever else may be yours.

Yet, allow me to say straight away, that if you expect anything resembling the sermonic in this book you had better close it at once to save further disappointment. I believe the young men of the nation need practical advice as to the best ways of succeeding, not only in making money—which is very important—but in trying so to live that the State shall be relieved from unnecessary burdens. A great London editor told me the other day that he did not believe the rising young Englishmen “cared a button” for success—their heads were full of sport! “Go to America,” he said, “or Canada, and you will find men who try to succeed. In this country, their ideal of life is football.”

There is some truth in the indictment. The mass of young Englishmen, I believe, are very anxious in a vague sort of way to “get on.” What they suffer from is the belief they cannot, because competition is too great. They break down in their efforts under the spell of this pessimistic hydrogen,



and they turn to sport. I want to pump the oxygen of optimism into them until they understand the spirit of Napoleon when he said "There shall be no Alps," and "Impossible is a word to be found only in the dictionary of fools." Pump sufficient mental ozone into a young man's mind and his intellectual machinery will yield wonderful results.

*You can succeed.* I am sure of it, not because I have always succeeded, but because I have often failed, and failed because nobody opened my eyes as I propose to try to open yours. I was reared largely on food for the mind that related itself to another world, and consequently it took me a long time to understand a little about this one. I strongly advise you to be ready for the Other World when you are called upon to enter it, but in the meantime it is very important that you live in this one, and it may surprise you to know that when you were born into it, your work was born with you. Your head was fitted up with a per-

fect set of unused tools and your body was made splendidly in such a way as to carry them about with you wherever you went. Would you oblige me by thoroughly digesting my last sentence? I had to work twenty-five years before I understood all the truth locked up in it. You can take the truth it contains for granted, and gain the benefit of it in less than twenty-five minutes. You may see nothing in it, because your theory of life is to wait for something to "turn up," and the fact is that nothing does turn up unless you turn it. Everything has a trick of stopping where it is until you shift it. You have not yet said: "I will find a way or make one." When you say *that* with faith in God, you will find all the invisible hosts move with you, to knock down like skittles all obstacles. They will ensure your success. *You can succeed.*

I have failed—failed a hundred times—why? Because I did not exercise ordinary vigilance in watching opportunity. A day's

experience of life and the world literally teems with opportunities of personal advancement and of doing good work. But if you watch the mass of men you will notice they live in "runs" and ruts of action, like rabbits. They seldom fly like the eagle, scan the horizon, and cast a piercing eye all over earth and sea. They are not awake. They are walking somnambulists. The men they meet, the book they read, the newspaper they buy, the event that happens, and everything else that takes place, are nothing to them! They do not see that all these things are the gifts to them of a ceaseless Providence conducted and ruled by Invisible Beings, saying at every moment of time to them—Can you do nothing? Your friend meets you and says he wants to find someone who can do this, that, or the other thing. A million chances to nothing you could do it, if you tried. What takes place? You listen, stare into space, and tell him you cannot think of anyone to do it, for the

moment. The angels are busy. They fly from you. You lacked tact and daring. You exhibited no force of character. You were not prepared to fail. One ounce of persistence at that critical moment might have proved of more value than a ton of modest reflections. Any book you read, you could write better if you would try. The newspaper you have in your hand does not report something you heard and saw yesterday, for which the editor would have paid you well, had you cultivated the idea of how to report it just as it happened ! It was exactly what he wanted, and you didn't send it. Forgive a personal illustration or two. I visited Hawarden on the day Gladstone's body was removed to Westminster Abbey. There was a great crowd, but no reporters. The next morning the papers said :—"Mr. Gladstone's body was conveyed from Hawarden by train to London yesterday." It was all I had expected, and hence, I had sat up late the night before and sent a descriptive article to *The British*



*Weekly*. It appeared the next day as a *British Weekly* "Special." Had I never written that article I am quite sure I should never have been the Editor of *The Young Man*. Another fact; I was travelling a short time ago from Marylebone to Chesham. A lady began to talk to a gentleman opposite to me on how she grew watercress in a bucket. An hour afterwards an article was on the way to *Farm and Home* in London, entitled "How Watercress is Grown." The editor accepted it by return of post with thanks and a postal order for 8s. 6d. followed. I saw the lady a week after, and said:—"Pardon me, Madam, will you kindly read this?" She read it and laughed, and having heard my story, claimed 4s. 3d. ! But why did you not write it? I asked.

You can succeed. Find a way or make one. Every day brings its opportunity. If you miss it, that opportunity will never come your way again.

"Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute; What you can do, or dream you can, *begin* it."

It is not for me to tell you what you can do, or what you dream you can. You know what you can do far better than anyone can tell you, and what you dream you can do is what you can do, if you are determined to do it. The only purpose I had in giving you the two foregoing personal bits of reminiscence, was to bring out this fact, that life teems with opportunity, and history is full of the records of men's accomplishments that were considered impossible by individuals less resolute than themselves. Yes; not only considered impossible, but scorned as dangerous and absurd. Seize the opportunity as it presents itself to your mind. It is Nature in distress because you do not follow her lead. Reverence your intuitions. Ignore the doubts and criticisms of your best friends. You know, better than they do. Should we have had the aeroplane if the first man who thought of it had listened to the advice of his contemporaries? Would Marconi have linked the world together and laughed at space, if he had

lounge about an Italian café, and listened to the pessimistic inanities of men who always have a thousand reasons to give you why a thing cannot be done? Is a thing possible in your department of life? [Then, with the help of God, clear obstacles out of the way by means of prompt decision and concentrated action, and repeatedly organise victory out of every failure.] "Get at it," as navvies say, and work as hard as a navvy if necessary, and sing as you work, and if you can't sing, whistle, and if you can do neither, keep on smiling. Learn to welcome failure as your best teacher. This advice is based on the example of the only successful men I know in London to-day. A young man sent me an essay the other day for publication. He thought it was A1. He was so disappointed when I told him it was amateurish, that he frankly said he should never try again. This is the attitude that ruins men. Keep on, if you are following the bent of your mind, even if you have to fail for years. Find out where you go

wrong, and try again. You cannot fail in the end. Nature is never wrong. You *can* succeed. You *must* succeed.

There is no need to recall the heroic deeds of Napoleon, Horatius, Themistocles, Wellington, Ney, Peary, and hundreds of other men to prove our present contention. These men simply acted on the principle we are laying down for you to follow.

[They swept the world before them by laughing at difficulties. If you think these men, and thousands of others, reached their positions by luck, you are mistaken.] There is no luck about it. The world is not run on luck. Luck is a fool's word. [Weak men wait for opportunities, strong men make them.] And given a man who is awake to the opportunities of life, and is prepared to work, I would "back" him to match all the forces that can be arrayed against him. He will weary them. He will make them bow to him at last.

Even the darkest hours and circumstances create opportunities. The greatest fortunes



have been built up by men who were driven by penury to ask—"What shall I do?" Cowper wrote:—

"God moves in a mysterious way,"

after attempting to commit suicide. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" was the result of his imprisonment. The greatest literary tragedy of last century was Oscar Wilde, but be it said kindly to his honour, he gave us after his awful moral fall—"The Ballad of Reading Gaol." It is impossible for any man to escape the chances of good work, self-improvement, and living a clean, manly life. Seize them. Capture them. Wherever you are, whatever your circumstances, open your eyes and ears: your chance is before you. Until you have learnt this secret you cannot enjoy life. Happiness results from work well done. And if this is true in the hour when all is dark, what about the bright, cloudless hours of life? It is astonishing how men let them pass, and fail to make hay whilst the sun shines. All

the railways in the world to-day result from a man thinking over the effect of steam, on the lid of a kettle. This is a "chestnut" sort of illustration, but you have two eyes and a brain, like James Watt. Do you use them? Are you sure? Shakespeare adopted James Watt's method. He *looked* at Shylock demanding his pound of flesh, and in a dozen lines he transformed both into an immortal image. The finest court-paper is made out of rags.

Solomon hit the centre of the target of success in life when he wrote the words: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings." Franklin stood before five and dined with two. Kings are most hospitable individuals. You may say—"Yes; but I am not a Franklin." I beg your pardon! *You are.* Your work may not be his, but the work you do in your department may be done as well as he did his.

You say you are only a mechanic, an office boy, a "hand," or an operative, and

there is no chance for you. There never was a greater chance in the history of the world. Dreaming and indecision are killers of men. There is no room, except in the workhouse, for the lazy, sluggish, purposeless man. Try to understand what John B. Gough meant by his fine witticism: "Some men have three hands apiece, a right hand, a left hand, and a little behindhand." Be in time. [Be awake. Have an aim. Don't wait for luck. Luck is a fool's word, I repeat. Do the duty that lies nearest to you. Do it as well as you can.] Let life unfold as you commit your ways to God, and ask Him every morning, and especially at night, to direct your paths. You will find that He has so made the world that He can and will direct you, but if you go through life like a man moping his way in the dark—lazy, pessimistic, critical, sour—you will end it by saying there is no God, and that existence is not worth its troubles. There is a God, life is worth living, and you can succeed. Will you? That is

the only question you have to answer. Say "Yes," and from that moment all things will bend to your God-directed will and consecrated heart. The result is as certain and accurate as the chemical formula for a drop of water.

"We must take the current when it serves  
Or lose our ventures."

There are few things Shakespeare failed to see.



## CHAPTER II

### "NO CHANCE FOR *ME*"

Nothing in my experience with young men has been more painful than to hear many, I fear most of them, say:—"I have no chance. I am poor. Everything is against me. I cannot do it. What is the good of me trying?" Such words indicate a fatal blindness if they continue to be uttered. The facts of the world's life make their inferences absolutely false. I will prove it with quotations from the experiences of men we all know. The facts of biographical literature prove to demonstration that the world owes its present advancement to the stinging nettle of poverty. The ranks of the English aristocracy have given us some fine men, but their contribution has been as

nothing compared with that made by the common people. No greater delusion can take possession of a lad's mind than that because he is poor, or has to face terribly adverse circumstances, he cannot succeed. The rich man's son inherits lands, bricks, stone, gold, but with them come cares. Banks break, factories burn, shares vanish, and a thousand other things happen that often leave his brain unable to grapple with affairs. This is not always true. We could cite noble exceptions. On the other hand, a poor man's son inherits as a rule stout muscles, a strong body, and a clear brain. Many a king on a throne has envied them. Health is the fundamental capital. Given that, success is certain, if you will work. Poverty helps.

Dr. Talmage once uttered some words that ought to be printed in gold. He was not a philosopher or a great theologian, but as a sensational preacher and a shrewd observer of men and things he had few equals, and the following words reveal his knowledge of life. "Let me say in regard

to your adverse circumstances," he remarks to young men, "that you are on a level now with those who are finally to succeed. You will find that those who, thirty years from now, are the millionaires of this country, who are the orators of this country, who are the poets of the country, who are the strong merchants of the country, who are the great philanthropists of the country, mightiest in Church and State, are now on a level with you, not an inch above you, and in straitened circumstances *now*. No outfit? No capital? God gave you hand, foot, ear, brain. *Equipped? Why, the poorest young man is equipped as only the God of the whole universe could afford to equip him.*"

This witness is true. The blackest soils give the fairest flowers. The loftiest and strongest trees spring heavenwards from among the rocks. I hold that calamity is not a curse. Early adversity is a bitter blessing.

A knock down is always a push up in the life of any man who is genuine and made of the right stuff. Poverty and

defeat create that mysterious daring of the soul that always survives obstacles. The best wine is always found at the bottom. Poverty in the life of a true man always produces sharpness of wit and diligence. It teaches prudence, fortitude, and patience. The object of the Almighty is to produce men after the Divine Pattern. He knows the necessary conditions. Accept them. Do not criticise His plan. Work in harmony with it. He knows much more than you do. Trust Him and go on working. You will come out *all* right. His Son, Jesus Christ, was born at the bottom of the social ladder, so that He might become "The Way" on which men might get to the top. This is not pulpit theorising. It is fact, fact that can be tested by history, just as you can test the truth of the formula  $H_2O$ , in chemistry. The young man who sits down and favours the Almighty with his notions of how the world ought to have been made is a fool! Many of the captains of history to-day began life as poor boys.



Dr. John Kitto wrote his first book in a workhouse. Æsop was born a slave. Vice-President Henry Wilson tells us he knew what it was to ask his mother for bread when she had none to give. James Gordon Bennett founded the *New York Herald* in a small cellar in Wall Street. Jean Jacques Rousseau was a waiter. He said he studied longest and learned most in the school of adversity. I have no faith in the judgment of any man who has not passed through it. Humphry Davy made old pans, kettles, and bottles contribute to his success. Elihu Burritt worked at a forge ten or twelve hours a day, and became a master of many languages in his spare moments. Edward Everett said of the manner in which this boy with no chance acquired great learning: "It is enough to make one who has good opportunities for education hang his head in shame." Thomas Alva Edison started life as a newsboy on the Grand Trunk Railway. He sits on the scientific throne of the world. He is a total abstainer

and singularly moderate in everything except good work. Richard Cobden was one of nine children left penniless by the early death of his father. John Bright was the son of a poor working man. The most eloquent thing in England, I always think, is Bright's gravestone at Rochdale: a small, plain stone in the graveyard of a Quakers' Meeting House, on which are inscribed the two words: John Bright. That is all. Michael Faraday carried newspapers about the streets to loan to customers for a penny apiece. Lord Beaconsfield, England's great Prime Minister, started life as a boy with no chance. He once said: "*I can overcome.*" We get our word dynamite from a Greek word which in the New Testament is translated "power." I am convinced that "power" resides in each man naturally, to overcome all the difficulties of his life, if he will enjoy its use. One of the great secrets of success is to enjoy overcoming difficulties in just the same way and with as much zest as we pay

to watch a good football match. "When I found that I was black," said Alexandre Dumas, "I resolved to live as if I were white, and so force men to look below my skin." Even when Galileo was blind, he kept constantly at work. Herschel played the oboe to get a meal. George Stephenson was one of eight children whose parents were so poor that all lived in a single room. Lord Eldon was another lad with "no chance." He was too poor to go to school, but it will pay you to find out how he became the Lord Chancellor of England, and one of the greatest lawyers of his age. It was a boy who was born in a log cabin who emancipated four million slaves. All the eminent Americans were born low-down. One of Beecher's great lectures was entitled "The rise and reign of the Common People." I travelled two hundred and fifty miles to hear him deliver it in the Colston Hall, Bristol. I was only a young man then, with more impudence than sense. I sat immediately in front of him. He said

something about America leaving England far behind. I looked up at him, and smiling, said "Shame!" He caught the humour instantly, and leaning over to me smiled in return, and said "*Whose?*" That one word was a great sermon. Whose shame is it if *you* are left behind? No chance? Nonsense!

Success is possible, despite difficulties. The Maker of the world uses poverty and difficulty as His principal means of making men. It is His way. If a young man will only get this thought rooted in his mind, life will assume another aspect to him. How bitter I was at twenty years of age as I looked out upon the world and witnessed its social injustices and inequalities! I believe I wrote a book about that time denouncing furiously all capitalists, and the whole system of things! I am still of the opinion that something is cruelly unjust in the constitution of modern society and commerce; but one day it dawned on my mind that I was commencing at the wrong end,



and it is only because the telling of my personal experience has helped some young men more than the details of the lives of great men, that I now ask the reader's forbearance as I relate another bit of personal history. I left my home in Cheltenham when I was about sixteen years of age and went to London to commence work, if possible, in Whiteley's establishment in Westbourne Grove, W. My self-confidence and conceit were probably unparalleled in London at that time! Sixteen is a critical age. Mr. Jones, the Manager, asked me what I could do. "Anything," I said, with that weak, retiring, shy estimate of myself which was the only charming characteristic I possessed. It was an adorable trait, which Time has caused to fade, but Mr. Jones looked as if he had at last caught "a whale." He was deceived. So was I. He gave me a job on one of the ledgers, and half-an-hour's effort proved to me that there was probably no greater ignoramus in Whiteley's. I shall never forget walking up and down Queen's Road,

Bayswater, W., that night. Should I go back home? My pride stung me. I was the youngest son of a poor family of fourteen children. I could imagine my mother's look of despair if I returned home! I was all alone in London. Being a theoretical socialist at that time did not serve me much. I could have argued a horse's hind leg off that night in proving all the socialistic theories to be quite correct, for, in one respect only I resembled Gladstone, who told a lady on one occasion that he did not suffer from any impediment of speech. But no talk would save me. I was "up against it," as they say in Canada. I either had to get a proper education, and swallow many things in the meantime, or go back home, and watch my mother, one of the noblest creations of God, cry over me! I stood stock-still in Queen's Road, W., and said: "It shall not beat me. I'll die first." I walked straight to a shop and bought all the necessary text-books, promising to pay by instalments. I then went over to a

confectioner's shop in Queen's Road, and asked if the proprietor could rent me an attic at the top of his house. I got it for 2s. a week. Each night I worked in the attic from 8 to 11, except one night which I gave up to the Debating Society at Dr. Clifford's church, at which I delivered several great orations, with which posterity will not be favoured. The audiences laughed at me. One old lady said I suffered from "a running at the mouth," and that libel has since been published in *The Westbourne Park Record*. On one occasion Dr. Clifford stood in the doorway of the schoolroom just when I was reaching the heights of some sublime anticlimax, and I was surprised to watch him retire at the point at which I felt I was saying something really important. I could never understand why the audiences laughed at my golden thoughts, but nothing daunted me. At the end of three years in the attic, I sat for an examination which gave me four years' free training at Nottingham University College.

Now, this tale is not the record of a great man's life, but an experience in the career of the unimportant writer of this book, and I tell it only to show and prove that difficulties can be overcome. Walk up to them and defy them. There is inertia in everything until you bring the mind and will to bear upon it. But will-power and faith in God will move mountains.

The difficulties in the way of success are not outside a man, but always in him. Do not get angry with the world, but rather with yourself, because it defeats you. It need not. It cannot, if you stand on your own legs, erect, self-reliant. When you fall, get up again, and go on as if nothing had happened. You can. You must. When you fail, use your failure instantly to teach you how to succeed. No chance for you? You an exception? Nonsense! You are *the* very man the world wants and needs. God calls. Man calls. Why not rise and walk?

"There's a star to guide the humble,  
Trust in God and do the right."



## CHAPTER III

### THE CLEVER MEN WHO WASTE THEIR LIVES

I KNOW many clever men who are using their lives to solve insoluble problems. They think these problems are of vital importance to the human race and themselves. Hence they devote all their spare time to the reading of pamphlets, or listening to speeches, that deal with questions like the following :—

Who was Cain's Wife ?

Did the sun ever stand still ?

Did Isaiah write " Isaiah " ?

Did a whale swallow Jonah ?

Is the Church of Rome " The Scarlet Woman " ?

In what year is Jesus coming again ?

Who made God ?

Where did God make the Universe,  
and how ?

Where did He get His materials ?

Is the will of man free ?

Which religion is the right one ?

&c., &c., &c., . . . !!

It has been painfully amusing to me to watch these brilliant, argumentative fools, these living Epistles of social, scientific, and theological conundrums. I met one of them the other day with his heels down and the edges of his trousers ragged at the bottom. He asked me to lend him fourpence to get a doss-house bed for the night. He has one of the finest brains in London. He never drinks, swears, nor gambles. He loathes anything immoral. He is one of Nature's gentlemen. I asked him what he was doing. "Well," he said, "I hope to get a job in an office shortly. I hope something will turn up ; but I have been trying to-day to settle two questions in my mind—  
(1) Presume the Universe had a Personal Creator—where did He get His materials

to make it? (2) How can a man's will be regarded as free?"

Then he stared at me as if expecting a word of appreciation.

I felt more inclined to pour out vituperative scorn. But having controlled my lower Adam, I said: "Look here, my dear boy, don't you ever get married." "Why?" he said, as innocently as a baby cries "Mamma."

"Because your wife," I replied, "will have to keep you, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have to make the Old Age Pensions payable at 35 in your case."

He was offended. Would it not be more consistent on my part if I stimulated his intellect by giving him more problems to solve?

"Yes," I said, "I will give you some problems. Go home and solve them. Here they are:—

"Am I a fool?"

"Will theological conundrums help me to be a useful member of Society?"

"Am I working to pay 20s. in the £?"



"Have I helped someone to do ditto to-day ?

"Are my parents proud of me ?

"Does the world afford me opportunities of bettering my position if I were not a fool ?

"Am I forging ahead ?

"Am I wasting my life ?

"Were Isaiah, Job, Daniel, and Paul born fools ?

"Are Edison and Marconi idiots ?

"Is there a chance for me ?"

His face was a study! He turned on his heels and wished me good-night, with my 4d. in his pocket.

My submission is that there is no hope for this man until his brain is swept of its delusions. He is of no use to himself or his fellows. He is a good speaker at open-air atheists' meetings. When all his clever speeches have been delivered he will be found begging fourpences and cursing everybody who lives in Park Lane. He is an extreme sample of countless numbers



of men who lack the iron will and the granite determination, who do not *use* life, but *debate* its origin, and *discuss* its effects. The world is all wrong, and they think they can put it right by argument. The only thing they don't try to do is to put themselves right. They ease their consciences on the point of laziness by loving to hear themselves talk about matters of not the least moment.

The man who sees and succeeds takes up another angle of vision. Here is the world : beautiful, grand, mysterious, full of resources. Whatever its origin or cause, it must have been equal to its effects. With an intuitive faith he takes this for granted, and forges straight ahead. He has no time on hand to debate quibbles. The world is here to be used. He will use it. It is a workshop. He will be a workman who does not need to blush. He sees that things bend to will. He will will to make them bend. This is the man who succeeds. And Nature has ordained

that no other man shall scale her heights. All the rest shall spend their mighty genius for open-air loquacity in debating the first and second chapters of Genesis, or matters of a cognate order.

The lack of will-power and its concomitant, intellectual waste, is simply appalling. "The truest wisdom," said Napoleon, who had a mind like a lance cutting into hard fact, "is a resolute determination." "Is it *possible*?" he asked one of his generals. "Yes."

"Then forward!"

This is the attitude of mind that succeeds. Notice the man you cannot "down." He is always witty. Why? Because humour is sanity, and a resolved will always accompanies wit, pricking intellectual bubbles as quickly as soap-bubbles burst. If I will to do a thing, I find that the world is so made that between my shoe-leather and the rim of the Milky Way there is plenty of space and freedom to act. A crowd naturally gives way to any man who is bent on getting

through it. It is a curious spectacle, but a space is made for a firm, decisive spirit. I get this last thought from John Foster, whose essays are worth reading every morning before breakfast, finishing off with Psalm 150.

Get away from the spinning sheds of theology. Jesus never wove in them His Garments of Eternal Thought. He was a weaver at the Loom of Time. He *worked* whilst it was Day. He always had His Eye on the Night, when the doors of the Weaving Shed would be locked.

The strong man lays hold with both hands on anything that will serve. You knock him down to-day, but before sunset he is on his feet, walking swiftly down another road, racing from you with new dreams ! He will give you his answer in brick and stone and thought. You will meet him again some day and feel small and foolish. The strong man does not need your assistance. He will stand on his own legs, then walk, then run, and come up

alongside of you, after you have knocked him down, and leave you all behind in the race. He may have mud on his clothes like Dorando in the Marathon, but he will reach the Stadium and touch "the cotton" and fall nearly dead, rather than give in! This is the stuff that makes a man and an Empire. We cannot run the British Empire on gas-balloon speeches at the Marble Arch on the great question—"Who was Cain's Wife?" or "Was Jesus born of a Virgin?" Manhood is not reared on theological puzzles.

The thing that young men and women lack is not strength, but will *to do*. This can be cultivated in the same way as a man trains his memory. Resolve to conquer or die. You won't die. Your enemy will. A man fails because he does not will to succeed, and because he does not use his intermittent failures as part of the way to ultimate triumph. The will finds the way, and sets the pace.

Don't think I am telling you anything



new. I could not if I tried. Kaufmann, Smiles, Wells, Meredith, Carlyle, Emerson, Shakespeare, Darwin, and hosts of others tell you nothing new. You will find everything they say in seed-form in Homer, Aeschylus, Socrates, Plato, the Greek literature, and the Bible. And yet every word they write is new, and you read on and on as if you had never read anything like it before. Why? Because all they write is dipped in the blood of their own painful efforts *to do* and *to be*. The man who *does* and *is* will make you listen to him whether you wish or not. He is original. He has something to say in a way it was never said before, and you feel that every word has been forged on the anvil of an iron will. Disraeli was an absolute failure as a speaker at the start of his career. But did he not say, "The day will come when you will listen to me?" And of course it came. Gladstone was always finest in a storm. Beecher was the most finished orator I ever heard, but we shall never know

what it cost him to earn the reputation! When you had heard Beecher preach you said: "Only Beecher could preach like that."

Everything gives place to effort. That is the law of the world as I read it. We don't want to know what you say you can do. Do something. We will quickly tell you what you have done, and if our judgment is wrong, Nature's will not be! Nature will see to it, despite Murray, that "Sartor Resartus" sees daylight, if Carlyle will only stop grumbling and keep on working. He could do both, but he did the latter—you make no mistake! "Frederick the Great" was not written without a few attacks of indigestion and volcanic eruptions of mind, due to organ grinders in Cheyne Row. Go and see the place at the top of No. 5 where our great dyspeptic Thomas worked, and if after the visit, you make environment an excuse for failure, you ought at once to apply for admission to an asylum. Environment?

My environment, my dear sir, is not *me*. The great workers of the world don't talk about their environment, and wait for another to be delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer per parcel post *via* The House of Commons. They make one. They have no time to wait for Parliament. They are out and on, if not in England, then out and on, to the Colonies, and the stars, if necessary. They let Parliament wake up to the situation. (*Their* will is master!) I hardly think we owe modern civilisation, with its comforts, to Parliament, but to individual men who read the law of the iron will and act on it. Modern Canada is really at bottom the product of the thoughts that passed through the brains of two Scotsmen with an iron will.

We are either right or wrong in our philosophy, there is no *via media* in this matter, but we hold that the rising generation in Great Britain will not succeed in the future unless they are educated in the personal initiative on the highest ethical

and religious lines. The great problem is—how to train *that* in each child born in the British Isles? The world is now the competitor. We really must leave behind Cain's wife and cease to talk in the language of Canaan. Let the lady rest. We really must cease our inquiries as to the inspiration of a *book*, and ask whether there is a way of producing inspired *men* who can and will be able to master difficulties. The pulpits of the land must become spiritual batteries surcharged with power to help men to live and succeed in life, rather than social clubs in which public addresses are given on subjects that the average man in the street does not care for, any more than he likes stale fried fish.

“Begone!” cried Alexander to a lieutenant who said “I can’t.” Napoleon dared a plague in Egypt to prove that fearlessness was a preventive against disease. “I won’t die,” said Douglas Jerrold when the doctors said he must; *and he didn’t!* Every nerve and fibre of Sir Walter Scott said, when he




was in debt to the tune of £30,000, "*The debt must be paid.*" The debt was paid. Who are you? Mr. Will, Mr. Won't, or Mr. Can't? Mr. Will wins all along the line. Jesus was right. Mountains are shifted by faith. Jesus was always saying "*I will.*" Faith in God is not antagonistic to human effort. We are fellow-workers with God. At any rate, St. Paul said so, and he had a mind second only to Christ's. The world's stage has absolutely no room for Mr. Can't or Mr. Won't. They must be ordered off. We are very sorry, but, gentlemen, we cannot help the order. The world is *so* made—good day! All of us would like a long holiday, a sort of "Three men in a boat" existence, especially if Jerome K. Jerome would be with us and pay all expenses, but as it is we are learning the way to enjoy ourselves by "keeping at it," and we have no room for Mr. Can't and Mr. Won't. The boat would sink in shallow water long before we reached Putney Bridge. Bad health,

did you say? Rufus Choate had no constitution at all, and Darwin was always ill for forty years! "I trample upon impossibilities," said the elder Pitt. Garrison wrote the words "I am in earnest." Darwin's favourite saying was "*It's dogged that does it.*"

Time is money. Don't waste it in dissecting intellectual cobwebs. Look at them, understand them, and pass on. They are the counters of fools. On a dial at Oxford you will find the words:—

"Periunt et imputantur."

If you waste time, time will waste you. Don't let it. Keep young. Learn how to start life at forty-eight. I am just now quite enjoying that trick. When I get a sciatic pain down the left leg, I instantly think I have been kicked in a game at football. It's a fine trick. Try it. The Bank of Time pays 100 per cent. Its offices are open everywhere, always. Will you invest and draw the dividends? I hope you will.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CRY OF—"WHAT AM I TO DO?"

NAPOLEON made a remark to the effect that the tragedy of the world's life was woman. There is a certain amount of truth in this pathetic opinion, but to my mind the most awful fact about the world is the number of square boys one meets forced by their parents into round holes. It is no joke, I assure you. Fortunately it is something that can be altered, but up to the hour of writing, parents by the million all over the earth are taking Nature's task out of her hands by arranging what work their sons and daughters have to do. It is a tragic mistake, and this we hope to prove.

We should require a whole chapter to

give the names only of men who succeeded in life despite their parents. It is absolutely laughable to hear a father talk about what *he*, not Nature, proposes to put his son to do, and it is more than painful to watch the father and son quarrel about the matter. But inevitably ! It is highly probable that the parents are fighting Nature by their choice, and they find it is never pleasant to make one's knuckles bleed by knocking them against brass. The most interesting tale, amongst hundreds of others, that history gives us is that of Thomas Edward of Aberdeen. He could never be kept at school. He would dodge everybody and go out into all sorts of places, and bring home tadpoles, beetles, frogs, crabs, mice, rats, spiders. His parents would whip him for doing this. What blind fools ! One does not like to use such language, but it so relieves my emotions that you will allow me to repeat the remark—*What blind fools !* His mother tied him to the leg of a table, but Thomas was too much for her. He dragged the table to the fire, burned off the rope and escaped,



returning at dusk with a large collection of living creatures. It is absolutely painful to read how his parents, and a wooden-headed schoolmaster, treated this budding genius. Here was a Darwin and a Huxley "in the making," Nature was tugging and pulling with all her might to get her way against home and State. Look at it closely and long enough and you will see that Thomas Edward of Aberdeen is a microcosm of the tragedies of life. We shall need many more Old Age Pensions at an earlier age than seventy, if we don't alter this. It can be altered—yes, the State in part can alter it. Every one of these human tragedies can be abolished for ever by following Nature's lead. Think of the ghastly sarcasm on human blindness uttered by Mother Nature when Thomas Edward was driven by poverty to become a shoemaker, instead of being allowed to follow his unequalled love of investigation. There are countless thousands of similar things taking place within five miles of the British House of Commons at this moment. Our

pulpits are filled with men who would make competent business or professional men. The one thing most of them cannot do is to talk well. But his mother liked the idea of dear Charlie being a minister, and although he would have made a rattling good auctioneer, he decided to take what he thought was the softer job, and discovered to his sorrow what some of us have proved, viz. : that no sphere in life is more difficult than that of the Christian minister. On the other hand, many a Beecher in a raw and crude state can be found in the cotton factories of the North and the shoe factories of the South of England. My lords and gentlemen of the House of Commons, until you have altered this and brought your legislation into line with Nature's laws, you have put nothing right. You will go on with your mending and tinkering, and patching and talking, and the world with its tears and sorrows will baffle you, and laugh at your little Parliamentary Bills. The finest thing that could take place in England to-day would be for

Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Lionel de Rothschild, and Sir Edward Carson, to all meet King George at dinner, and after enjoying themselves in discussing things that cannot possibly do any good, devote the remainder of the evening to a practical solution of this problem: *How can the money of the British Empire be used to enable square boys to get into square holes?* Nature would pronounce a benediction which the Archbishop of Canterbury would never dream of!

My father wanted me to be a carpenter. My own impression is that a cow could be trained quicker to handle a musket than I to make a deal table for a back kitchen. Yet my father set his heart on making arrangements for my future. Whilst he was doing this I had an irrepressible longing to sell the *Cheltenham Mercury*. As a boy at eight years of age I loved to handle and sell newspapers, and get up on a stool or chair at home and deliver speeches. Without being asked, I used to mount the dresser at home, and deliver my opinions on

Gladstone, with mother and father and all at home as audience. The only reward I got for these spontaneous floods of oratory was to be told to "shut up." And when they heard that I—a lad of eight—used to go up to Christchurch on Bayshill, Cheltenham, and deliver sermons to the trees, they had grave doubts as to my sanity. They were all as blind as bats, except one—*my mother*. She saw, she never laughed. She saw much more than I did. When I was ten years of age she would give me a penny to buy *The Christian World Pulpit* to read Beecher's sermons. And when I told her one day that I sometimes saw myself talking to great crowds, she looked so solemn at me, but never spoke. Weird and wonderful and mystic mother, solemn and brilliant! My father would dryly remind me he had been for years buying his chest of tools for me. My father never detected what Emerson beautifully calls "the bubbling omens." Nor did I! That's the point. How does any boy know the meaning of those ethereal fires that burn



in the brain? But the world is old enough to teach Governments what these "omens" mean, and until they learn, they will go on voting millions of money to armies and navies in the hope of curing the world's ills. When my father saw me rush down the High Street, Cheltenham—a delicious rush—selling *The Mercury* to beat the boys who sold *The Echo*, rushing once again to drop the coppers I had earned into my mother's lap in the hope she would give me some money to buy a book (which she always did), one would have thought my father would have said, when I told him I wanted to enter the ministry, "Well, my boy, I don't understand you, but you had better have your way." No; this is what he said: "Those tools are for you. That business can be yours. I have set my heart on it. You will not enter the ministry with my sanction. You are too young even to think of such a thing." All that I could do was to stare at him. My mother saw a mile where my father never saw an inch. I remember her saying: "Well; he

knows what he wants to do. Let him go to London. Whatever bed he makes, he will have to lie on it. Every tub stands on its own bottom. If you become a minister, my boy, you will have trouble: for you are yourself, and independent. But that may be a reason why God Almighty wants you." Then she wiped a tear from her eye, and I ran away, not knowing what was the matter with me. A thousand times my mother's words have come back to me. They were uttered when I was fourteen years of age. My mother was right, my father (I say it with all deference) was wrong. Nature became Arbiter. One morning, after being employed as a boy in an auctioneer's office in the Promenade, in which my only task was to try to leave a vivid impression that I had something to do when nothing was being done, I resolved to leave home. I resolved to follow the bent of my mind, at all costs. I learnt to preach extemporaneously by going into the lonely spots in Kensington Gardens, and delivering sermons to the trees. I delivered addresses at

a mission in Chapel Street, Paddington. I made thousands of mistakes, but something told me that if I struggled on I would at last be able to talk as naturally to an audience as I did to the trees in Kensington Gardens. I was determined never to seek to enter the ministry, but one day Robert L. Lacey—a splendid fellow, who became a missionary in India—asked me to do so. Dr. Clifford endorsed the wish. Everything else followed. Thus life unfolds if you follow "the bubbling omen" in your own mind. Preaching, lecturing, journalism—for these things, alas! I was born. They rolled in my being as a boy, like lava. If I had known their troubles, I should have shuddered from them, but Nature veils these things and punishes you if you thwart her plans. Looking back, I can say, despite innumerable defeats, I would take the course I took, had I the chance to live over again the last thirty years. My father was wrong, and before he died he told me so. My mother was right. But what a tragedy when both mother and father are wrong, and consign their sons and



daughters to misery by forced choices! Better be a master chimney sweep than a tomfool of a lawyer or doctor or parson. Don't be a square peg in a round hole. Never mind about family pride or ambition. Consult Nature. She is never wrong. Follow her, or the waves of Fate will swallow you. But if you are sailing the sea you were fitted to sail, you will find it illimitable. No storm will sink your boat. You will go to the trough but rise again to the crest of the waves. Nature, I hold, cannot betray any man who moves in harmony with her. That is a solemn moment in the life of any youth when the trees, the flowers, the stars, and God, all seem to whisper in his soul the secrets of his Destiny. This is falling into the arms of God. Woe unto you if you fall *out* of them! God has loaded every soul-needle to point to the star of its own destiny. You may twist it by wrong advice and education, but let it be free and it will fly back to its own star. Dante saw this truth—was made, alas! by brutal sufferings to see it. "*Follow thy*



star." The great truth, what Carlyle would call "The Open Secret" of the Universe, is this: Life is spiritual, mystic, throbbing with blazing intuitions; the Matter of it only the flimsy curtain that hides the Mind at the back of it all, grand, sublime, working through stellar space and controlling its crucibles of Fire with ease as this little earth rolls in the centre of the visible creation! The planet is not an orphan. There is no need of a wrongly-constituted world. A Mind presides over the Universe thinking in terms of star and flower and intuition. Follow it—or perish! This is the "Open Secret." This is not theological imagination. It is fact, the hard fact of daily life in the City of London, if thou hast eyes to see it! It is fact, blazing like the fires in the Fish's Mouth in Orion. And if thou canst not see this, then still, O man, follow thy star! Accept the connection of events. The day shall come that will bring thee light. The Universe is not a Palace of Mud. Such a theory is a lie. The Universe is the Temple of the Living

God. Be a worshipper of Him in it. Know for certain you are in it for a purpose. Find out that purpose. You can. Do your work well. The best wages will come. Rise ! thou lazy-bones, thou dreamer of foul dreams ! Get up ! Carry thy bed and walk ! Thy work is here in this world. Find it. Do it. Be prepared for any torment, but do it. The reward shall be infinite and eternal. Rise ! and face the world, and say, "I am a Man, made by the Living God. I have my work to do, and I must do it, or die." Verily you shall find a way, and though the world swarm with thickheads who did not understand you, Nature will make posterity write the words: "He was a man."

The parents of Michael Angelo declared that no son of theirs should be an artist. The parents of Jesus rebuked Him for giving them trouble in leaving home without due discussion. Pascall's father would have chosen dead languages for his son to study. The father of Joshua Reynolds rebuked his son for drawing pictures, and

demonstrated the perspicuity of his intellect by writing on one of them "done by Joshua out of pure idleness." Turner, the landscape painter, was intended for a barber. That beats my father's choice. Why not suggest to Mr. Asquith that he should be a chimney sweep? The sight would vividly illuminate the "jackassery" (I quote Carlyle) that characterises the use made of talent in the modern world. As I look at the square pegs in round holes, I don't know whether to laugh or cry. Born artists are collecting pennies by chalk-pictures on the pavements of London. And to prove what a cruel genius men have for letting other men go to utter ruin, or allowing their talents to be buried, remember the end of Robert Burns, through debt, and call to mind that Molière was apprenticed to an upholsterer, Schiller was sent to study surgery, Handel's father tried to kill his love of music, Defoe was sent to be a soldier, Erskine spent four years in the navy, Cromwell tried to be a farmer, Goldsmith became a laughing stock in a surgery class, Robert Clive was "a dunce"



at school, the father of Dr. Isaac Barrow regarded him as "a dullard" and hoped that if the Lord took one of his children it would be Isaac, and John Wesley's father called John "a blockhead." Remember these things and then ask whether in the choice of a career it is wise to obey your advisers or your intuitions, your father or the Soul that blazes like a star within you. And let every Government ask whether the first step in framing an Education Bill is to obey Nature in helping each boy and girl to fulfil their destiny? I have less and less hope of the future of our Empire until we see to it that square pegs are not put into round holes, and the only consolation I have in the meantime is that

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends  
Rough hew them how we will!"

But I fail to see why, being so busy as He is, we should give the Almighty as much work as we do!



## CHAPTER V

### THE LITTLE BEHINDHAND MAN

THERE are more ways of being behind-hand than in being late in keeping an appointment, although it is certain that many a wasted life dates its ruin from a lost five minutes. "On time" or "not on time" makes all the difference to the feelings of the man who is waiting for you, and three minutes late may cause failure, and the fault will be invariably your own. If any type of man arouses my irritation, it is the man who arrives at a business meeting five minutes late, and causes me to go over the "preliminaries" for his special benefit, after he has been probably dawdling along the road thinking and hoping the meeting would not be long. (If a man keeps me waiting for a reply to my letter, he is a thief of my money, i.e., my time, and if he

does not answer my letter at all, he insults me. It is as if I met him in the street and politely said, "Good morning!" and he never acknowledged me. The comet that visits our solar system but once in a thousand years is never a second behind time. A promise and an appointment are as sacred as the divine ordinance of marriage, and the man who keeps neither is a rogue and a fool. Or, if he starts ingeniously to excuse himself, he is worse than a fool. He is a practical liar. His name is Mr. A-Little-Behind-hand, and men at last shun him as they shun poison. Answer to-day's letters to-day. Be five minutes before time, like Napoleon. Learn to work like a good English lever watch, instead of like the donkeys on Blackpool sands. (Success in life is the child of a well-known married couple: Punctuality and Accuracy.)

A Spanish Proverb says: "When a fool has made up his mind, the market has gone by." La Fontaine has a fine saying: "It is no use running; to set out betimes is the main point." Many men in their

efforts to succeed remind me of a sight often seen at a railway station: A man rushes up the platform to enter a train *on the move* and the porter bangs the door as he shouts, "Stand back." A minute made the difference. It could have been obtained with ordinary foresight and effort. The loser found time to consider the loss! If a man gets into the habit of losing a day by loitering, he will lose to-morrow and the next day in the same way. Yet it is quite as easy to be a little beforehand as a little behind. Put this to the test. "Let's take the instant by the forward top," said Shakespeare. A man lost an order for £5,000 worth of goods the other day in the Strand because he was two minutes late. "The boss has just gone," said the clerk; "he told me to express his regrets, if you called, but as he did not know whether you would come, he has gone to order elsewhere, because he was bound to settle to-day." The traveller had taken five minutes to study the Cinema pictures of Dante's "Inferno," which could

then be seen in the Strand. He passed into a real Inferno with his employers shortly afterwards. If men will not wake up to the actualities of life, they must go under. It seems cruel and unchristian, but it is neither.

The law of Necessity is one of those stern laws by which the Almighty rules the world. He acts on it Himself in Stellar Space. He dare do no other! ✓

But I remarked that there are more ways of being a little behindhand than in being late. You will find yourself behind in the race of life if you do not master what St. Paul meant when he said, "This one thing I do." He did many things—tent-making, for instance—but he was making sermons and building the materials of his immortal letters all the time. He travelled, but it was to preach. He did one thing, although he did a hundred other things to do it. If I found that the Editorship of *The Young Man* interfered with my pulpit work, I would leave the chair instantly. It does not. It helps me, even if I work twelve hours every day.



You will be behind if you do not study the prudent art of concentration. One intense stroke of faithful work is worth a million dilatory and spasmodic efforts. Don't hurry. Pin your mind down to master the point before you as if it were the only thing you had to do through all Eternity. Then it will stick. But if you skate over it in a hurry, you will find it will be wanted in twelvemonths' time. Then you will be just a little behindhand when the other fellow comes up with the information *who took his time ten years before to fix it in his mind.*

Dr. Aked and I were students together in the Midland Baptist College. He was the most brilliant man in some respects I ever met. Our minds unfortunately clashed over certain things, but I never ceased to admire his genius, and I am certain there was no jealousy on my part. Yet he was a mystery to me, probably because I was a man of much smaller gifts than he, but I was determined to fathom his secret power of assimilating facts. I know him, and in his heart

I have no doubt he is a good and sincere man, besides being a born genius. One day in college I was talking to him, and I watched his lips moving. "Why do your lips move like that?" I asked. "I am repeating word for word what you say," he replied, "so that I can concentrate my mind on it and repeat it, if necessary, at any time in future!"

*And he could do it.*

All that day I wandered about Nottingham in a dream. I had noticed that Aked always *listened* to the lectures whilst I and other students filled penny copy books. I had now caught his great secret. No more writing sermons for me! I would centre my mind intensely on the thought or the fact—*see it*—then trust myself to pen or utter it. I would challenge Aked in an examination in Logic. He accepted the challenge. All the note-takers were behind. They had been taking notes, not concentrating their minds. Aked's method beat them. They were all rounding Tattenham Corner whilst Aked beat me by "a short

head " in this Logical Derby. He scored the whole 100 marks. I got 99. From that day to this I have not read in the pulpit a dozen sermons, and I have prepared three fresh ones a week for thirty years. You may call it a good memory, but you are wrong. Memory is the product of the art of concentration, combined with a determination to trust your natural powers of expression. Turn not to the right or left; stand on your own legs, not stilts, and look straight on. Owen Meredith wrote the words :

"A harvest of barren regrets"—

It follows lack of concentration on one thing. Form your purpose, and then death or victory. But the mental habit of concentration is vital. I was once called upon to interview a great journalist on "Spiritualism." Shorthand—a fine thing—would have been my ruin in that hour. He talked two hundred words a minute at least, walked up and down his room like a lion in a cage, answered telephone messages, dug his hands into the pockets of his trousers,



leaned against the mantelpiece, walked to the window, and then darted round the room like a man whose brain was moving his feet. I sat back with placid serenity. I had thought I could say a few words, but I surrendered the claim after that interview. I felt that Aked's method had failed this time, but I concentrated my mind on my questions, then listened and watched for an hour. The great Editor handed me a type-written reply to one of my questions, but that was all I had.

"Are you going to report my words?" he asked, as I left him.

"Yes," I replied, with fear and trembling.

"Then I must see the 'copy.'"

"You shall."

I went straight to a coffee shop, asked for some paper and put down my questions *first*. His replies seemed to come like "cotton off a bobbin," as they say in Lancashire. Aked was right. It is a great secret and it applies to every department of life; the human brain is capable of retaining anything if you master the art of prudent



concentration. "He did it with all his heart and prospered."

I have made so many mistakes that I could not relate these little personal incidents otherwise, and they drive home my points more effectively than quotations from the Greek Tragedies or Fowell Buxton. I hold it true that he who would do some great thing in this short life must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces as to idle spectators, who only live to amuse themselves, looks like insanity. The last sentence is not mine. The composition is too good, but I read it in a book and do not remember the author, a fact, by the way, that needs a warning. I was asked once to go to Preston to speak. I read on my way a speech by the Rev. Dr. Clifford, M.A., D.D. It intensely interested me. I did not know what to talk about, so I got up and talked on the same subject. The next morning the papers reported the speech, but the *ipsissima verba* in many parts were Dr. Clifford's. I was very much troubled, so I wrote the Doctor with ample

apologies and explained the action of my mind at times. He replied on a post-card "Never mind; in the Apostolic times they had all things in common (see Acts)." I keep that post-card. It justifies Aked.

The Rothschilds owe their success to concentration. Not many things, but one thing, if you wish to succeed. The member for Mid-Bucks, Mr. Lionel de Rothschild, moves about the world as calm as a lake, quiet, kind, gentle, courteous, but put a faulty business proposition before him, and then note how he places his finger on the fault as if his mind acted like the law of gravitation. Do you suppose that such a trait comes by chance? Mr. Rothschild is a banker, and he does one thing. He studies his business. For instance, you won't find this sign outside his office in St. Swithin's Lane, E.C.

"GOODS REMOVED, MESSAGES TAKEN,  
POETRY COMPOSED, PUBLIC SCRIBE, DIGESTS  
ACCOUNTS, EXPLAINS THE LANGUAGE OF  
FLOWERS AND SELLS FRIED POTATOES."

If the Rothschilds conducted business in so

many branches, it would be a serious thing for Europe, and they would be ruined in a week. We find what we seek with all our hearts, and if we look for nothing in particular, we find nothing. This is the law of the world. The wind never blows fair for that sailor who knows not to what port he is bound. When Nathan Mayer Rothschild left Frankfort to come to Manchester, he had an aim, and did what he came to do, and the aim so infected the family that it is hard for the Rothschilds to have any other. It spells success. God cannot run His world on theories only. The man who sees and acts as if he were the only man in the world is bound to succeed, and it is right he should. The world is too small for verbal gasometers. It is too large for the man with an aim and both eyes open, for he never finishes his work. Paxton Hood recommended an overworked man to pray, "Lord, help me to take fewer things into my hands *and to do them well.*" "I go at what I am about," said Charles Kingsley, "as if there was



nothing else in the world for the time being." A man may not have great culture or education, but he can keep both his eyes open, and that was the secret of Hogarth's success. Did Charles Darwin do much more? He used his two eyes for forty years and thought over what he saw. Go thou, in thy department, and do likewise! Don't talk about difficulties. Enjoy them. Catch the humour of them. Horace Greeley sat on the steps of Astor House and used his top hat as a desk on which to write an editorial for the "New York Tribune." Very funny, of course, but the world talked about that "leader." Greeley could not afford to be behindhand and he could not do the job in the office, so he caught hold of his top hat. Rufus Choate, the lawyer, never stopped until he felt certain he had convinced *all* the jury. To lose one of them would be to lose the case. He would be behind. His success was due to concentration. He, and all such men, understand the pungent meaning of the following lines :—



His talk is like a stream which runs  
 With rapid change from rocks to roses,  
 It slips from politics to puns,  
 It glides from Mohamet to Moses,  
 Beginning with the laws that keep  
 The planets in their radiant courses,  
 And ending with some precept deep  
 For skinning eels or shoeing horses.

If you have got too many irons in the fire, take a few out. You won't injure the fire or the other irons. They will get more heat. ✓ Be definite in your aim. Aim at what you can hit. Don't consult your relatives. Consult yourself. ✓ The great workers are usually early risers. Get something done before breakfast. Give your bedposts plenty of elbow room. You will enjoy life all the better, but if you lie in bed late after getting there early in the morning, you will find the other fellow the same morning "on the job" before you.

Men are ruined quicker by being a little behindhand, failing to keep an appointment, and breaking their promises, than from any other cause.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE VALUE OF SANE HUMOUR AND POLITE BEHAVIOUR

✓ HUMOUR is oil to life's wheels. Manners are its highest certificate of character. And the two are one, for without sane humour, that is, a genial, happy nature, you get brusque manners, and these spell ultimate ruin. The man who carries about with him gout, asthma, and nearly all the diseases in the pharmacopœia, and does not detect the humour of the situation is absolutely hopeless. Sydney Smith, with a touch of inimitable humour, once remarked on nine maladies he had, "but otherwise," he said, "I am very well." You would naturally have laughed had he uttered the words to you; he would have laughed back, and his

maladies would not have driven you from his presence but been a cause of subtle mental pleasure to both, and in the process the sufferer would be getting better all the time.

✓ Some men you meet on Monday are suffering from a dread fear that they have caught the influenza. On Tuesday they are sure they have gall stones. On Wednesday they see a specialist. He advises complete rest on Thursday. On Friday they have "the pip." The week-end is spent suffering from a severe attack of "the hump." I used to suffer years ago in this way and paid the usual fees to be invariably assured that there was really nothing the matter with me (a slanderous trick of the doctors, I used to think!) and I was always glad to avail myself of a long rest. Until recently, the attacks were persistent. "Three Men in a Boat" was a constant source of solace to me, for I was ill, and needed a long rest. But the joke has dawned upon me. It was a hoax, one of Nature's tricks to cure me of laziness. I

buy every morning two bottles of medicine from the Optimistic Stores at the offices of *The Young Man*, 36 Temple House, Tallis Street, E.C., labelled "Laughter" and "Hard Work," and I enjoy fine health. I have no time for "nerves" now. I have lived to understand the lines by T. B. Aldrich:—

"This one sits shivering in Fortune's smile,  
Taking his joy with bated, doubtful breath,  
This other, gnawed by hunger all the while,  
Laughs in the teeth of death."

If you don't want to die and wish to *live*, keep on laughing, for anxiety never yet bridged any chasm. There are hundreds of men who pass down Fleet Street every day, whose white hairs were produced by troubles that never came. Find the remedy for your trouble, and if there is none, never mind it. Time will find one for you and save you the trouble. There is little hope of a man who is not humorous and cheerful. He never endures. The man who endures is not an optimistic fool, he sees a brick wall in front of him when it is there, but he plans cheer-



fully to shift it or get over it, and sings with Mackay :—

“ There’s a good time coming, boys, a good time coming,  
Let us aid it all we can, every woman, every man.”

Men talk about “retiring” at seventy. If they form the habit of cheerful work long before, they cannot retire at that age, except into the grave. And they should not. I know several men of seventy who have a way of saying in deeds they are seven. Goethe said that when you are getting old the art of living was to start life afresh. We talk about the “shady” side of seventy. The sunny side, rather. Then comes the sunshine to the peaches. Knowledge is valuable. Cheerfulness is good. Obsess the mind with the humour resident in all that lives. You will live. Look at the bright side of things. Make it a habit of the mind. “In everything give thanks.” You can form this habit as easily as any other. There is humour in everything, even in a graveyard, and the Almighty must enjoy fun and laughter or He would never

have made them in such large quantities. Our graveyards are sacred places, but why weep in them if Christianity is true? "O Death! where is thy sting?" is an optimistic shout that extracts the sting. Many men could fitly arrange to have the following epitaph placed on their tombstones. It comes from the Greek, in commemoration of an old bachelor:—

"At threescore winters' end I died,  
A cheerless being, sole and sad;  
The nuptial knot I never tied,  
And wish my father never had!"

Of other men, who have met with the blows of life, especially those of rejected love, the following could be said, and truthfully:—

"She first deceased; for he a little tried  
To live without her—liked it not—then died."

It is impossible to believe that the Creator intended any such pathetic finish. I trust I am not irreverent, I hope I know the way to weep with those who weep, but I thank God I can laugh, enjoy a joke, and say with

Talley, "I find nonsense singularly refreshing." "Laugh and grow fat" is a sound medical prescription. The Universe is quite serene, the day has twelve hours in it; why tear your soul into tatters? A happy doctor is far more valuable than his medicines.

Most of the complaints of people are functional; if you could make them laugh, they would soon be better. The finest cure for neurasthenia is to keep on telling the patient there is nothing the matter with him, and get him to will to do something for somebody else.

I am a great admirer of Henry Ward Beecher. I had the honour to stand in his pulpit with his successor—Dr. Hillis—last year, and as I entered Plymouth Church, I was met by an old deacon whose first remark about Beecher was: "He was a man full of fun and humour." Then the old man laughed. It was Beecher over again. I regret to say that some ministers make me feel poorly. Their faces are moving cinemas of dyspepsia. Beecher was the greatest joker in College. He was full of fun. He

shocked a lot of people. He would ; but the greater the man the more sunshine he sees on any dark sea. Solemnity of character never necessarily indicates depth or genuineness. Sir Walter Scott, who was one of the happiest men in the world, wrote the words: "Give me an honest laughter." Sir Walter came up against some boulders of trouble in his time. Men who go through no pain seldom laugh a genuine laugh. They snigger and "smile on their teeth." But your Shakespeare had known such pain that he could conjure up a Hamlet and a Lear, yet such a sea of humour rolled in him that he could produce a Falstaff and "The Merry Wives of Windsor." "I dare no more fret than I dare curse or swear," said John Wesley.

The Puritans were fine men, and Lord Rosebery tells us we are not producing them to-day. No ; and Nature is wise. They served the purpose intended. But they groaned as they worshipped and pulled faces for the glory of God as long as yards of pump water. They sucked melancholy out



of music, as a weasel sucks eggs, reminding us of Jacques. Yes ; and they laid the foundations of the British Empire that way. All honour to them, but we want more of Beecher's spirit now, if our Colonies are to be carried to greatness. No groans needed now, but rather work, and rippling laughter, photographed on the stars. Worry and religious melancholy are diseases. It is never movement that destroys machinery, but friction. Humour oils the parts. We will not be melancholy. We will listen to no preachers who depress us with horrible pictures of suffering for sin in some other world. We are in this world, and we will live in it by fixing our eyes on the Christ, Who did not shut Himself up, away from the world with its temptations, Who did not teach some long-faced, gloomy theology, but Who uttered a Gospel of gladness and goodwill to all men. He was out in the sunlight, with the lilies, on the seashore laughing with the children, watching the birds, and sending His happy Soul out into the Infinite! No humour in

Jesus? Go and read the New Testament again. Would you have smiled as He depicted rich men trying to get into Heaven with a big hump on their backs, like a camel through a hole? His words are full of the most delicious humour. Read them again. He told the Pharisees they "strained" at gnats and "swallowed" camels! If modern preachers could reproduce such up-to-date humour, the churches would be too small to hold the crowds. But, alas! we retain the old Puritan clothes with few Puritans inside them. If Oliver Cromwell were living to-day, he would think we were living in the Millennium. He would laugh, then cry, and then laugh again. We don't crop off ministers' ears and pass Five Mile Acts now. The King invites Dr. Jowett to his Coronation. Of course, the twentieth century is not 1663. It is England, not the land of the Pharaohs. "He shall fill thy mouth with laughter," said one of Job's "Comforters," in a moment of exceptional vision. We cannot build the British Empire with groaners and moaners,

but with men of hope, and courage, and cheerfulness. Schiller is right :—

“Joy is the mainspring in the whole  
Of endless Nature’s calm rotation.  
Joy moves the dazzling wheels that roll  
In the great timepiece of Creation.”

Be in earnest? Ah yes! in deadly earnest, but let the melodies of the spheres abide in your heart. Success, real success, is impossible otherwise.

And another thing that oils the wheels is politeness. We have yet to understand—we English—what Shakespeare meant when he said :—

“What thou wilt,  
Thou must rather enforce it with thy smile,  
Than hew it with thy sword.”

There is great culture needed to say “Thank you” with a smile and in a pleasant tone of voice. But directly I meet a man who can do it naturally, I know I have met a gentleman, and he gives points to all the other types of gentlemen. “When Dickens entered a room,” said one who knew him well, “it was like the sudden kindling of a

big fire by which everyone was warmed." After Stephen A. Douglas had been abused in the Senate he rose and said: "What no gentleman should say, no gentleman need answer." Mirabeau was one of the homeliest men in France. It was said he had "the face of a tiger pitted by small-pox," but the charm of his manner was irresistible. "Throw a bone to a dog," said a shrewd observer, "and he will run off with it in his mouth but with no vibration in his tail. Call the dog to you, pat him on the head, let him take the bone from your hand, and his tail will wag with gratitude." The dog recognises the good deed and the gracious manner of doing it. Those who *throw* their good deeds should not expect them to be caught with a gracious smile. "Bees never sting a man smeared with honey." Wasps are bad-mannered brutes, but they get attended to in many ways. Cowper said:—

"A modest, sensible and well-bred man  
Would not insult me and no other can."

"Men, like bullets," said Richter, "go farthest when they are smoothest." Christ



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was courteous, even on the Cross, towards His persecutors. Dress and personal appearance are important things, but the man inside the clothes is far more important.

Sane humour and politeness are passports to certain success. That was my point and I trust I have made it clear.

## CHAPTER VII

### ONE THING NEEDFUL

STEAM is necessary to run engines, all engines, the best engines. It needs coal and fire to get up steam, good coal and bright fire. Five minutes in the matter of getting up steam is of vital importance. This was proved the other day at Kirkby Stephen, where a train had to slow down to get up steam, and as the stoker had only bad coal behind him, a terrible disaster took place in five minutes. Time and coals meant every-thing. How long does it take you to get up steam? What sort of coal do you carry with you?

What steam is to an engine, enthusiasm is to a man or a Cause. Lose it, and you are lost. Keep it, and nothing is impossible. Nothing great was ever achieved without it.

Since the dawn of the world's history every great movement has been the triumph of enthusiasm. The majority of human beings are like the carriages of a train. The man who draws them is he who has plenty of steam, and good coals in reserve to get up more.

"A bank never becomes very successful," says a noted financier, "until it gets a president who takes it to bed with him." A business never succeeds until a man is in it who proves that what he takes in hand *must* succeed. His attitude is, "If you can't do it, get out of the way, let me have it and I will show you how to do it." This type of man hardly ever fails. While the other man is dreaming about what cannot be done this man sees what can, and with clear eye goes straight to the spot and does it. No great book was ever written that did not make the author ill. How could Carlyle be other than ill? A man does not write "Sartor Resartus" and the "French Revolution" without an attack of indigestion. He has to put up with it and go on. Dickens tells us he was haunted by his

stories and on one occasion a certain sketch made him look as haggard as a murderer. All the materials of moral and spiritual enthusiasm are in every human being. All that is wanted is something to set them on fire. The heart is all, and when that is really engaged, a man can do anything. Jacob did not find fourteen years' slavery impossible. He had the fever of love in his heart all the time. Given the high-minded workman with enthusiasm for his work and all things are possible to him.

What is enthusiasm ? Being alert, awake, determined. That is all it is. The enthusiast treats life seriously and does not fool his time away. He feels he has a mission in life, and voices from the Invisible call him to his duty. He is real to the core of his being. He is excited, moved with holy passions, and thought burns in his brain. His eyes are open. One of the finest things ever said by mortal man was uttered by the actor Garrick when asked by an unsuccessful preacher the secret of his power over audiences. Garrick replied :—



"You speak of eternal verities, and what you know to be true, as if you hardly believed what you were saying yourself, whereas I utter what I know to be unreal and untrue, as if I did it in my very soul."

Here is the secret of nearly all unsuccessful ministries. True, the internal conditions and legal foundations of certain churches make it impossible for the enthusiast to work, but he need not be bound by them. There is plenty of room outside. Let him cut the cords that bind him. Flames cannot be bound. "The Word is not bound," said an Apostolic prisoner. The eager, alert, vivid minister, full of joy and humour, bubbling over in his spirits, and sending his sympathies out upon men and women like electric flashes, cannot be bound. He eludes even your touch. He strikes orbits far out of the reach of the dull official. The organisations of the churches are weaker than water in the presence of such a soul. He does not need their help. He asks for no stilts or crutches. He will be a man, standing on his own feet, or nothing. I

say God moves with that man and no other, and that that type of man is worth a million of the other sort when his day's work is reckoned up. Given a minister whose thoughts breathe in words that burn and kindle fire in the hearts of men, and he need not fear the Pope, the Presidents of Unions and Councils, or the Archbishop of Canterbury. Nature will bowl all of them over like skittles in an alley, if they get in his way. Nature will see to it that he strikes his orbit, and woe unto them if they cross it ! For fire burns, steam drives, and here is a man who has fire and steam in him, who can trust God in the dark and defy the world. How can your sleek, tight-rope-dancing, diplomatic, curly-haired, smiling church officials injure or stop *such* a man ? Let them clear out of the way—little men ! The enthusiast will utter his thought and do his work.

The most irresistible charm of any man or woman is a great and deathless enthusiasm. The finest illustration I know of it in modern life is found in The

Maréchale, the late General William Booth's eldest daughter. Everybody knows that a cleavage took place between The Maréchale and The Salvation Army. The merits of the dispute or the cause of it, I know nothing about; but I do know that in certain quarters it was held that The Maréchale should not preach, lest the work of the Salvation Army be injured! Officialdom always reasons thus. "They follow not after us, so stop them doing any good, O Lord!" I am not aware that this was the present General's attitude to his sister, and for General Bramwell Booth, whose personal friendship I esteem, I have nothing but goodwill. But I repeat that I know that the attitude taken up towards The Maréchale in some quarters was what I have described.

Now watch this wonderful woman as she moves in the dark. Undaunted, she leaves herself in the Hands of the Power that moves the world, and slowly but surely she begins to strike a greater orbit of influence. She preaches now with tears in her eyes.

She rocks an audience of men into emotion as the Atlantic makes the biggest liners roll. "Stop me preaching?" she exclaimed to me on one occasion, "Never!" No; verily no! The Eternal Laws ordain that thou shalt preach. Fear not then, great soul, thou *shalt* preach! Darkness may surround the brave, but ultimate failure is impossible.

I will dare to affirm that humanity is always waiting for the soul that can liberate it by words of truth, spoken in power or with deeds of love, wrought with energy. And I go further: no Government, no organisation, no confederacy of men can resist such a soul. He or she is one with the Over-Soul that rules the world. Of what use was it to forbid the boy Handel to touch a musical instrument, or to stop him going to school lest he learn the gamut? What lunacy to try to stop Bach copying whole books of studies! If you won't give him a candle, he will use the moonlight. The boy West begins in a garret and plunders the family cat for bristles to make



his brushes. I always laugh when I think of that cat. She reminds me of church organisations that are always the sufferers if they try to control or persecute Genius and enthusiasts. The Popes went wrong with Savonarola and Luther, and the whole account is not paid yet. Enthusiasm cuts every Gordian knot. Give me a man who is sincere. I will bear with his mistakes. He will discover them as quickly as I shall, and learn faster probably. But your sleek, smiling, calculative, cold, diplomatic individual, who stands shivering at the thought of what the world may say if he acts as he knows he ought—take him away! The man has no steam in him—no dynamite to blast the rocks of Hell—take him away!

We ask for the youth who can do something with a grand enthusiasm. Tennyson wrote his first volume at eighteen. Napoleon had conquered Italy at twenty-five. Luther was on "the War-path" at the same age. This, too, is the age of young men and women. How old is MacGill, the navy poet,

whose every line blazes with genius? How old was Winston Churchill when he made England talk about him? Evan Roberts was a mere lad when he moved the heart of Wales to its depths. "People smile at the enthusiasm of youth," says Charles Kingsley, "the enthusiasm that it is their own fault they ever lost." I object to the last word. It need never be lost. Old age can catch it, use it, carry it into great issues. Gladstone had more enthusiasm at eighty than at eighteen. Homer was a blind old man when he created the "Odyssey." When John Milton could not see, he sat in a cottage not far from where I am now writing and depicted the love of the first pair in the Garden of Eden. Dr. Johnson's best work was done when he was sixty eight. I had the honour to receive a letter from Mr. Gladstone dated June 22nd, 1896, when he was eighty-seven years of age. It covers three pages—every word and the address on the envelope written by his own hand. It deals skilfully with a problem in Church polity as enthusiastically as if he

were just starting to think about life. Plato died writing at eighty-one. Dr. Clifford is nearly eighty, but his mind is clearer than any mirror you can buy in Regent Street, and his head is full of thought just recently on the question of "The Work of the Young Reformer." The way these old men tantalise us with their youth is remarkable. We don't like it. We are in the "sere-and-yellow-leaf" stage at fifty, while they are dancing about like boys at eighty. It is very annoying. James Watt learned German—the final punishment of the human intellect—at eighty-five. Humboldt completed his "Cosmos" at ninety. George Stephenson did not learn to read or write until manhood. I respectfully submit that Dr. Joseph Parker preached his best sermons when he was sixty-eight, and Canon Liddon's greatest sermons were his last. Talk about retiring or giving up! Where to? When? Rouse thee, my heart! There is only one safe place of retirement for the brave: the grave. There is only one "giving-up" called for—it is yourself.

Work on! Work on! until the day dawns and the shadows flee away.

But be careful how you use your enthusiasm. Be sure you do not burst anything with too much steam. You may have fine sense and exalted sense, and yet you may lack common sense. It is better to hide your ignorance than display your erudition. If ten hours of work kill, do five, rather than not work at all. Don't pack more into to-day than you can carry to-morrow.

We do not want evidence of your talent in the shape of University degrees. All the men who took degrees in my College days are unknown to me now. I never hear of them. We will take your talents for granted, but let us see what you can do with them, and how you do it. Can you plan, think, speak, act, and put your book information into real use before our eyes? What can you *do*? Talent can stay in bed all day. Steam is applied talent. It *does* something. Talent can tell us what to do, but we need to know how to do it. We admire the fine, noble Cambridge and Oxford degree gentle-



men. We love to hear them theorise, yet we do not need simply a theorist, but a performer, that is, a man with common sense. A graduate sent me a splendid article for *The Young Man* the other day. I returned it. It would have filled half *The Young Man* and sent all my readers to sleep. The writer lacked common sense and did not know how to apply his knowledge. He was an M.A. of London University. The philosopher may be able to discuss, but practical men have to act. All the degrees in the world are of no use to a man without the practical *seeing* eye. Of what use is the merely theoretical, one-sided, impractical degree man? Suppose he is a genius—what about that? Has he learnt the way to *do* something? Genius can be absent-minded. The world is full of men and men, apparently educated, who can scarcely earn a living. Louis Philippe said he was the only sovereign in Europe fit to govern, for he could black his own boots. Instead of sending my son to Cambridge University, I asked a builder to give

him a job that made him rise at six a.m. Then I asked a tradesman in Holborn to take him for three months, and teach him how to get about London and deal with *men* rather than *books*; then I got him into a London newspaper office to typewrite and do the actual work of an office. Spelling, composition, behaviour, attention, punctuality, knowledge of how to *do* all these things for so much a week. The other day I tried to put up a stack of rolled picture-plates in my room. I wasted an hour in the effort, and this son of mine was wickedly laughing "up his sleeve" at me all the time! He had been taught how to do the job. He said: "Let me do it, father." In two minutes the whole lot of rolled-pictures was stacked as firm as a rock, instead of rolling on the floor again. "Why did you not do it before and save my time?" I asked in an annoyed tone. He laughed like a farmer, and said:—"Well, it's a fair treat to prove to a man who was trained at College that there are some things he cannot do." I succumbed. What can you

say to anyone who so practically rebukes your ignorance? Real education consists in showing us how to do things, not in discussing theories. The foundations of the British Empire were laid by men who could not write their own names. David was not as big as Goliath, but he knew how to sling the few pebbles he found near at hand.

There is an element of character which is best defined as "the getting on" element, without which no man succeeds. If a man has it he will surmount all difficulties and adjust himself to any conditions or circumstances. Napoleon could make his own gunpowder when required. St. Paul could make tents when the Christians of the Corinthian Church forgot to pay his salary. Genius is always willing to work like a horse; if not, Genius is only a brilliant Cinema, the pictures of which are as unsubstantial as a dream. Genius in Shakespeare misses nothing—everything finds a place in his plays, the king and vassal, the fool and the fop, everybody, everything. The mark of a great mind is its power to

utilise the tools near at hand. According to an old custom, a Cape Cod minister was called upon in April to make a prayer over a piece of land. "No," said he, when shown the land, "this does not need a prayer, it needs manure."

Let us stop asking God to do, or expect Him to do, what He has given us the power to do ourselves. Struggle is the law of existence. And in struggling we find strength. Will you be a strong man or a weakling? Will you work? Will you understand things and allow your contact with them to produce your theories? Will you do the Will, to know the doctrine? Will you rise like an Eagle, and nod your head to the stars? You can. You must. The British Empire waits for you. Take up thy bed, O man, and walk!

*Good night*



## CHAPTER VIII

### SECRETS WORTH A MILLION STERLING

GEORGE MÜLLER, of Bristol, had a secret that yielded him £1,380,000 sterling. The Rothschilds have secrets that yield them more millions than George Müller ever prayed for or dreamt of. But the secret of Müller is still a secret to the vast mass of men, and the secrets of the Rothschilds are rapidly becoming secrets no longer. Men are tearing down the economic veils that cover their accumulated millions, and those who live the longest will see the most. But George Müller had faith in an unbreakable Bank, and try as one will to explain the facts given in the latest "Life" of this remarkable man, there is no getting away from them. George Müller had a very

simple explanation of them ; Prof. James has another, but I prefer George's to James's. Müller really believed in a Being of Infinite Power, whom, for want of a better term, we call God. George Müller believed he is a Living God who answers prayer. George was determined to put his belief to the test. In doing so, he gathered many spiritual secrets like pearls out of the soil of his silent communion, and although he never asked a human being for a penny, his secrets yielded him in hard cash, £1,380,000.

I never now try to reason a fact into something else. I have often tried to do so, and found it the hardest job I ever took in hand. For when I had expended all the mental ingenuity I could muster to the task, up the Fact would bob again, with a sort of As-You-Were look on its granite face. I never try to make  $2 + 2 = 5$ . I leave mental achievement of that sort to men like Huxley and Gladstone. I come to the conclusion that George Müller had a secret that was worth £1,380,000 sterling, and I conclude that blessed is the man who can "trust in the

Lord" as he did. For his face tells me he was quite happy. The Universe was a very serene sort of place to George. He never tore his soul into tatters. His smile would light up any heaven, if only his photograph were produced. Have a look at it. It is unlike some faces I have seen of men who have plenty of money. God deliver me from *their* secret!

Do you call a man successful in this mortal life who wears a bull-dog sort of expression on his face, which proves that he got his money by getting it anyhow, and never giving anything? Can you not read behind his browbeaten look the faces of widows and orphans who have to be attended to by some other George Müller? Do you call that man successful who has made himself fat by making others lean? Can a man be really rich by making others poor? Look at the poor avaricious wretch with his gold. I call him the ghastliest mockery of a man to be seen in the modern world. I don't envy him. As God is my witness, I don't want his gold, and won't have it. Chronic

avarice is stamped on every lineament of his darkened countenance. He looks as hungry as a wolf! I will keep out of his way, or he will eat me. Do you call that man successful in life whose avarice robs him of a sweet, serene, and beautiful smile, which always adorns the face of a high-minded soul? I call him the unsuccessful man.

Nature always paints on a man's face the sentiments that rule his heart. The face is revelatory. Money-making is not the highest success. The man who is swallowed up in business all the week, and lies in bed or seeks rest on Sundays—what he calls rest—to get ready for another “go” next week, is a human tiger. He is not a man, but a monster. Keep out of his way. He will gravitate to his own society. Character is the measure of success, not coin. The great man renders services, does good work, and gives his life to his fellows. Another type of man—let the world fawn and flatter about him as it likes—is a little man. His society is unhealthy. Integrity is worth more than money. The man who makes a



promise, and then lies and wiggles to get out of it, is not a man but a serpent, and you have only to wait long enough to hear him hiss if you get too near to him. Moral degeneracy always accompanies a great and ceaseless struggle for wealth, for it always strangles nobility of character and tarnishes the soul of honour. It dries up the sources of the spiritual life, impoverishes the mind, confuses the distinction between right and wrong, stifles the religious impulse, and blots all houghts of God out of the soul. The man himself becomes a mass of putrescence, a sort of dust-bin for bonds, stocks, mortgages, and patents! A poor, little, clever, scheming, petulant, irritable, small man, clamouring for gold and forging hell in his soul. Ask his wife if this language is too strong.

These are the reasons which cause me to say that Müller and other men have found secrets worth a million sterling—yes! more than many millions. It does not follow that the Maker of the World will lead or use you as He did George Müller; but of

one thing I feel as sure as I live—there is a Power above man that can be calmly trusted to guide and bless. From Homer down to W. T. Stead, the pure in heart have always seen this, and no man is really and permanently successful who does not see it. Stead hung up in his office the words, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding.” And men who have come to tight grips with the facts of life have been driven to adopt that text as a settled axiom of their daily—yes, hourly—conduct. It produces self-respect, self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control, and these are the four corner stones of success.

Egotism ought to be regarded as a divine gift. Our use of the word in ordinary daily life implies the possession of a repulsive characteristic. But what is the Ego but the Creation of a Person with infinite potentialities? Did not the Creator intend each man to become conscious of his own individuality and powers? What right has any man to hide them? What right has

he, under a mask of false humility, to try to lose himself? Why hide his soul under a "we"? It may be good journalism, but it is a poor return to the Creator. Even the moon is always visible somewhere, and the sun objects to the editorial "we." One great secret of success is to be yourself—think and act for yourself at the call of the soul's intuitions. If you know you can do a thing, say so. Never mind about the charge of boasting. Let us hear from you. Who told you to hide your light under a bushel? Do not be timid and shy. Dare to do. Have confidence in your own abilities, and let no man rob you of your right to learn to use them by the old-fashioned way of making mistakes. What right has any man to use you as a pawn in his own interests, and dwarf your manhood and influence in the process? Who told him to clip your wings to stop you flying? Great men have always had confidence in themselves, and the essential mark of the timid, fearful, little man is that he can never trust himself. Dante predicted his own

fame. Kepler said it did not matter whether his *contemporaries* read his books or not.

"Fear not," said Julius Caesar to his pilot, frightened in a storm, "thou bearest Caesar."  
"Do yourselves no harm"—why?—I, Paul, walk the deck. There is such a thing as divine egotism. It is a great secret. It is not the tin-god sort of stuff you meet in men who have had titles added to their names for political reasons. It is made of other material. "I could call twelve legions of angels and they would smite you,"—the tin-god little egotist—"to the ground." Did ever egotism reach a sublimer height?

The man who apologises at every turn and corner for himself is hopeless! He reminds us of the following lines:

"BROWN'S EPITAPH.

"Beneath these stones recline the bones  
Of 'Pologetic Brown,  
Most pathetic, 'pologetic  
Feller in this town.  
Asked to be forgiven, sir,  
Minute he was born;  
'Pologised for livin', sir,  
Reg'lar, night and morn.



"'Pologised for eatin'

An', when he went to meetin',  
Prayed the Lord, 'Excuse me, please,  
for askin' so and so !'

When he courted Susan  
He went right on excusin'—

"'Pologised for askin' her as soon's she'd  
answered 'No !'

Everyone picked on 'im,  
Cur dogs was 'sicked' on 'im ;  
Brown he took 'is martyrdom with  
pious humble pride ;  
Fin'lly, jest to spite us,  
He got 'pendicitus,  
'Pologised for troubling us, then went  
away and died.

"Here lies Brown, and let us speak  
With due respect for such ;  
Heaven loves the mild and meek,  
But *we* don't need 'em much."

Learn the greatness of what you are and  
you will soon see what you ought to be.  
Take no notice of what other men think  
you are or what you ought to do. I could  
produce some laughable letters from great  
men predicting my future if I took such  
and such a course. They pitied me. How  
they patronised me with their wisdom!

And it is very hard to follow the Still, Small Voice against the "wisdom of the wise." But you must. That Voice is God in the Soul. Its orders, if you disobey them, will return to you with the doom of judgment. Who and what are great men? Their thoughts as to you and your duty are vain. Your Soul is greater than the greatest of them. Care nothing for their dislike of you. Never chase a lie. Let it alone, and it will run itself to death. If you use your time in correcting people's lies about you—you will do no other work.

And may I ask—why are you so anxious to prove your birthplace and ancestry to be good? It does not impress us. We only smile. We have seen too much of men to be misled by the mere veneer and trappings of social pedigree. We remember the names of a few men who were born in log-cabins. The birthplace of Jesus has been recorded. We smile at you and agree with the old lines:—

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gowd for a' that."

You will not be asked, in Fleet Street at any rate, for a photograph of your birthplace when you ask for work. If one of the Peers came round with you, and you could do the work, and he couldn't, you would be employed. "The tools to the man who can use them." This is the law of things. Be self-reliant. Cease to curry favour, or toady at the feet of great men. Who are they? What are they? I tell you your own soul is greater than their wisdom. It has secrets. It whispers. Oh! listen, and obey, or its whispers become rolling angry thunder.

The mistake young men make is the one we all make, of treating such principles of action as impracticable. When a set of difficulties arises, men do not trust in the Sermon on the Mount, but rather a local lawyer, or friends. They fail to believe that the Higher Wisdom of the Mind of Christ is the only reliable and practical asset in life. They are tempted to think that "trickiness" is more valuable than faith, honour, and integrity. Alas! we are all driven like sheep to find out that unbelief

in the Teaching of Christ causes all our troubles ! But Christ's teaching once followed, in letter and spirit, a man finds his house is built on a rock !

"Be noble : and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

Lowell is right. And in so far as all great minds echo the thought of Christ, they *are* right. I am not preaching. I am talking business. If Christianity really ruled the world—and it could rule it to-morrow if men made up their minds it should—we should need no armies, navies, prisons, asylums, courts, or policemen, and very few doctors. We could go to bed without locking our doors, and the only arrangement we should have to make overnight would relate itself to the milkman in the morning. (Christianity as taught in the Sermon on the Mount is sound, solid, sane business. It is men who are insane.

I close this chapter with the quotation of a tale I read the other day. I will not



comment. I will let it preach its own sermon. He that hath ears will hear.

““Please, sir, buy some matches!” said a little boy, with a poor, thin, blue face, his feet bare and red, and his clothes a bundle of rags, although it was very cold in Edinburgh that day. ‘No, I don’t want any,’ said the gentleman. ‘But they’re only a penny a box,’ the little fellow pleaded. ‘Yes, but you see I don’t want a box.’ ‘Then I’ll gie ye twa boxes for a penny,’ the boy said at last.

““And so, to get rid of him,” says the gentleman who tells the story, ‘I bought a box, but then I found I had no change, so I said, “I’ll buy a box to-morrow.”’

“““Oh, do buy them to-nicht,” the boy pleaded again; “I’ll rin and get you the change; for I’m very hungry.” So I gave him the shilling, and he started away. I waited for the boy, but no boy came. Then I thought I had lost my shilling; but still there was that in the boy’s face I trusted, and I did not like to think badly of him.

““Late in the evening a servant came and

said a little boy wanted to see me. When the child was brought in, I found it was a smaller brother of the boy who got the shilling, but, if possible, still more ragged and thin and poor. He stood a moment diving into his rags, as if he were seeking something, and then said, "Are you the gentleman that bought matches frae Sandie?" "Yes!" "Weel, then, here's fourpence oot o' yer shillin'. Sandie canna come. He's no weel. A cart ran over him and knocked him doon; and he lost his bonnet, and his matches, and your elevenpence; and both his legs are broken, and he's no weel at a', and the doctor says he'll dee. And that's a' he can gie ye the noo," putting fourpence down on the table; and then the child broke down into great sobs. So I fed the little man, and then I went with him to see Sandie.

"I found that the two little things lived with a wretched, drunken stepmother; their own father and mother were both dead. I found poor Sandie lying on a bundle of shavings; he knew me as soon as I came in,

and said, "I got the change, sir, and was coming back ; and then the horse knocked me down, and both my legs are broken. And Reuby, little Reuby ! I am sure I am deein' ! And who will take care o' ye, Reuby, when I am gone ? What will ye do, Reuby ?"

"Then I took the poor little sufferer's hand and told him I would always take care of Reuby. He understood me, and had just strength to look at me as if he would thank me ; then the expression went out of his blue eyes, and in a moment—

"He lay within the light of God,  
Like a babe upon the breast,  
Where the wicked cease from troubling,  
And the weary are at rest."

Heaven meant principle to that little match-boy, bruised and dying. He knew little where he was to go, but he knew better than most of those who would have spurned him from their carriages, the value of honesty, truth, nobility, sincerity, genuineness—the qualities that go to make heaven.

## CHAPTER IX

### MORAL DYNAMICS

IF children could only get chocolate out of automatic machines without dropping pennies in the slot, what a lot of chocolate would be eaten! And if all men could succeed without paying the price, what a fine world we should have! I know a large number of nice men who would be great successes if someone would find them a "soft job." But the gods won't have it. They make you give your life as the price of success. I do not believe any man ever really possessed what he did not make. If a man is not prepared to be thrown on his own resources, and find his fortune in them, he might as well give the game up. He will not find it worth the candle. A clear,



strong purpose, backed by determination, with no thought of fame or reward, is the secret of success. The world is largely like an automatic machine. What comes to you through the door of luck goes out by the same way. You draw a blank at the finish. But the thing you labour for, you retain. Despite appearances to the contrary, I believe this to be the law of things. It is useless to dream pictures. You must paint them. And this takes time, and ensures a million bad strokes. If you are to chisel a bust in ten days that will live for ten centuries you must put yourself in training for thirty years. I preached a sermon last night that took me twenty-five years to prepare, but I was only five minutes in sketching the outline. All that Beecher had to do to preach was to stand up before an audience. Ideas bubbled out of his mind which he had dropped into it all his life by thought and meditation.

Study the lives of Milton, Newton, Bacon, and Michael Angelo, and note how they *toiled*. Scott's maxim was "*Never be doing*

*nothing.*" He wrote the "Waverley Novels" at the rate of twelve volumes a year. Daniel Webster worked for more than twelve hours a day for thirty years. The reward is always in the race, not the prize. "Nothing for nothing is Nature's inexorable law." It does no good to curse or cry over it. There it is : *obey it ana be happy.*

There is really no secret about success in business. All you need to do is to attend to it and go ahead. Be sure you keep your expenses down until your business is safe from perils.

Nature's aim at all points is to produce a man, and she never seems to care what price she pays or makes him pay, for she always makes him drop the penny in the slot after he has struggled to earn it, before she allows him to eat the sweets of victory. Her one and only aim is to develop character, stamina, manhood. The virtue lies in the struggle. Mr. Just-Going-To-Do never does it. Mr. I-Was-Just-Thinking-Whether-I-Would generally ends in just thinking. Thinking should produce quick vision,

and sight is power. You can have what you like, if you will pay the price. Abraham Lincoln walked forty miles to obtain a book he could not afford to buy. Do you think John Burns got into the British Cabinet by smiling nicely at the Prime Minister? I can assure you he did not. The next time you see him, study the face of a man who has toiled! MacGill, the navvy poet, honoured me with a MS. the other day. I was much impressed with the toil he had spent upon corrections. Most manuscripts I receive are beautifully written. The authors' brains seem to filter down into handwriting. I went one day to the British Museum to study the original MSS. of the greatest authors. They all seemed to say, "Toil-Toil-Toil." I suppose there is such a thing as genius, but I will never believe that "Hamlet" was written straight off, as a man eats an eighteenpenny *table d'hôte* luncheon in the Strand. Behind Shakespeare there is a long tale that has never been told. But we do know that George Whitfield blacked boots for the students at Oxford, and

that Dante endured a living hell before he wrote the "Divina Commedia." A Christian minister told me the other day he had enjoyed the ministry, had never been in trouble or persecuted, was highly respected by all the churches as far as he knew, and yet he had not succeeded in doing anything, nobody wanted to hear him preach, and his church, which was in perfect peace, was fast emptying! "Ah," I remarked with dry wickedness, "you have given the reasons of your failure." I hardly think it has yet dawned on his mind what I meant. How did Ward Beecher and Dean Farrar rise to influence humanity, although the former once preached as its Pastor to a church of nineteen members in an obscure town in Indiana? Did they know anything about trouble, persecution, ostracism? Did they court the patronage of the churches? Were they anxious about their reputation? Watch most ministers of Christ. The reason of their failure is fear of man. They run round and round after their reputations, like cats after their tails. The dynamite



that blasts the gates of Hell is not in them. The European democracy is not calling for men-pleasing, drawing-room smilers, but for men who have a message smelted in the furnace of affliction. I am sorry to have to pen such words, but I mean them. No Church or Society or Union or body of ministers should ever cause a man to lose his manhood, and if my present Church ceased to desire my services, and no other Church required them, I would get a Chair, and stand in the open air, and preach. I make nothing of this whining about empty churches. Fill them. And the way to do it is to cast the thralldom of external organisations away, and work, speak, and act as a living man, who will dare to do or die! The pictures of Michael Angelo haunted his soul, and he therefore carried the mortar for his own frescoes up long ladders. Anna Dickenson faced the pistol-bullets of the Molly Maguires. Galileo experimented with a straw in his cell when he was in prison. Napoleon waited seven years in obscurity for promotion, and kept on study-

ing, although he knew he was thoroughly prepared. William Lloyd Garrison endured the most bitter persecution and calumny for years. Why do you preach to empty pews while crowds roll past your church, and little children never hear the name of Christ? Why are you so good at supporting foreign missions, while this England of ours is "passing by on the other side?" Shall I tell you? Organisations, Trust Deeds, Unions, Councils, have robbed you of your manhood, your liberty and the only things that make for your influence and power. They buy you up, and rule you, by throwing doles out to you. They make you forget that Christ only is your Master. You are afraid to trust God in the dark. You no longer drop the penny in the slot. You must cut your environment. You must strike for your freedom.

And what applies to the Christian ministry applies to every department of life. Success never came to any man by simply craving for it, or if he stopped to take the least notice of what other men thought of

him. You can indulge in whatever dreams you like, but if you do not trust in God and work like a slave, you will fail. Rejoice in your poverty. Make it your spur. Shout aloud, if men persecute you and say all manner of false things about you ; for this is certain proof that you are being used by an Invisible Power. Christ told you so. Never mind about past mistakes. Jump up, high heart, and try once again ! The World is made of loam for you to mould. Don't fear to trust the automatic slot. If it fails to act, ring up the Manager. He understands the machine and will make it work.

A common complaint amongst young men is that they have no pennies to drop into the slot. Oh, yes ! you have. Comparative poverty is no excuse. Bunyan was poor. So were Johnson and Carlyle. Jean Paul Richter suffered greatly from poverty, but he said he would not have been rich for worlds. Gerard commenced life with sixpence. This sum is about all you need to buy books to make you thoroughly competent in reading, writing and punctuation.

If you are a master of these three things, you will be most welcome in many offices in London and elsewhere. My daily sorrow is that I cannot read the writing of many clever people, and I have returned recently more than one MS., because life is short. The way some people write is wicked. But if you can ever look at one of John Ruskin's bits of stenography, do so. Then get Silas Hocking's. Both these men write beautifully. Dr. Clifford writes nicely—at times. The Editor of *Tit-Bits* writes copper-plate. But if I had to comment on some writing I have seen from reputable individuals, down from Cabinet ministers to Editors, I should probably be running to the Law Courts in the Strand for two years, to prove I spoke the truth! And, of course, they would prove to their own satisfaction that I libelled them; but I do respectfully assert that to read, write, spell, and punctuate correctly are possibilities in the life of every man, even though he cannot pay for a dinner at the Hotel Cecil. I understand the Saviour of the world was born in a stable, and Garfield



in a log-cabin out in the wilderness. With all due respect to the King—and our present King is certainly earning our respect because of his daily interest in every good cause—I submit that there is no mental pleasure afforded him by literature and the arts which cannot be fully shared by his humblest subject who is prepared to master reading, writing, spelling, and punctuation.

But, to repeat, the price must be paid. William Penn uttered these immortal words:—“No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.” Plan the noble deed. Never flag till it succeeds. Though your heart bleed, and it will, face obstacles and defy them! As sure as the sun will rise again, your hour will come, and your Soul, following its Star, will rise to the meridian of victory. Go on! Run on! One more lap, and there, before you, is the prize. “So run, that ye may obtain.”

## CHAPTER X

### HOW THE DEFEATED CAN CONQUER

ONE of the difficulties of writing a book of this sort is to avoid preaching. I am doing my best to avoid the pulpit style and form, for I often feel that these lack reality, but I trust the reader will bear with this chapter, because I am conceited enough to believe that I am about to touch the deepest secret in life. We imagine at times that men reach great influence and commanding positions without sound moral character. It is the fundamental delusion of numberless minds. Do you wish to succeed? If so, you must study character and its influence. At bottom, it is the only power. Straightness always pays. The erect, steady, and constant man wins. The only thing

remembered about a man is his character. His relatives attend to his possessions. Tombstones hardly ever tell the truth. The one thing, and the only thing, that makes a sermon, a poem, a picture, or a play enduringly powerful, is the character behind it. You can take them all away if they lack *that*. There is no market for them; but set them on fire with *that*, and we will hire motor cars to hear or see them. Character is the diamond that leaves its mark on the glass. You may fail a thousand times (I hope you will!), but if you are a man of character your defeats will help you to conquer. Without character, your failures will ruin you. This is a strange law of life, but it is as true as Euclid's problems. Glow-worms have never yet matched themselves against the lightning.

The world bows its head to a man of character. William Ewart Gladstone made many mistakes in his legislation. Lord Morley points out how daring he was in resigning from office several times. The same could be said of John Bright. But

why could they act in this way with safety? They spoke with the accent of conviction. Their words were edicts. Nations listened when they spoke. They were men of character. Lord Randolph Churchill was a brilliant man, but when he resigned the Chancellorship, he forgot there was a Goschen in the rear. There was no second Gladstone in the rear. Character gives confidence. The only inherent force in any man is his character, and that is the thing you can never defeat. I have forgotten all the mathematics I studied at Nottingham University, but I have not forgotten Prof. Solomon under whom I had the privilege of working. Wellington was of the opinion that Napoleon's presence in the French Army was worth 40,000 additional soldiers. Richter said of Luther—"His words are half battles." Oliver Cromwell became Protector by sheer force of character. "I have read," Emerson says, "that they who listened to Lord Chatham felt that there was something finer in the man than anything he said." Character is the reserved force. It



is that quality which enables a man to survive without stilts and patronage. He needs no help. He will make his own way without any apology. He keeps half his strength unseen, while the man who lacks great character is always trying to get all his goods placed in the front window or borrows someone's crutches.

Character conquers before it speaks. Not what other men say you are, but what you are, is the only important point. Louis XIV. asked Colbert how it was that, ruling so great and populous a country as France, he had been unable to conquer so small a country as Holland. "Because," said the minister, "the greatness of a country does not depend on the extent of its territory, but on the character of its people."

Sound character in any man always manifests itself in the same ways. It never legally robs under false promises and pretences. It never tells a lie or covers facts. It is fair, just, and accurate. It is kind and true, merciful and generous. Above all, I think it would be right to say, it aims at

strict accuracy. George Müller's book-keeping was a sermon. An accurate man is essentially honest. The genius for accuracy never feels anything is complete when something is omitted. It instantly accepts truth from any quarter, because truth always shines in its own light. Character never says: "How cheap can I make these goods at most profit?" but "how good can I make them at cheapest rates?"

"Paint me just as I am, warts and all," said Cromwell to the artist who had omitted a mole, thinking to please the great man. Honesty never uses "et cetera" without making clear what is meant. There are thousands of ways of lying, and men get so used to adopting these ways that when you speak the exact truth they are the first to call you a liar. They lie without knowing it, and therefore their opposite in character strikes them as false. It need not surprise us that Jesus and the greatest men have always been called liars and deceivers, by men who studied them in the shadows of their own false intellects.

Nature is never false. She staggers us with perpetual reminders of her severe honesty. She never says nice things to avoid giving offence, or keeps silent when she ought to speak, or dodges the truth, or studies tact. She is just herself, without a wink, twist, or smile. A rose, a lily, or a snowflake cannot lie. Planets rush through the abysmal depths of space, but Nature is so accurate, and the mind of man so faultless in its wake, that we can predict to a second the appearance of satellites on the disc of Jupiter.

The accurate man is the valuable one. An employer does not want to be always on the look-out. He would sooner have you make a good pin than a bad steam engine. I knew a man of great ability who never rose to eminence, because he did not cultivate the faculty of order. It would take him an hour to find an important letter. To plan your day's work and do it to plan, is half the battle. Exact business habits are priceless in value. Accuracy means character, and character is power.

Thus I reach the point I want to make: *the defeated can conquer*. London contains numberless men who have been defeated in life. Is there no hope for them, no message? The great message is that:—

“Our hands contain the magic wand;  
This life is what we make it.”

One would imagine that the world's evils can be cured by collectivism and legislation to that end, after reading many modern books, in which much sound truth can be found. But it is impossible for us to conceive a desirable world in which the individual can cease to be the main factor in the sum of advancement. The world is a vast mirror in which we see our own faces. We make our own characters, and we have the power to alter them. “Though our character is formed by circumstances,” said John Stuart Mill, “our desires do much to shape those circumstances.” And Shakespeare wrote these words:—

“’Tis said best men are moulded of their faults.”

Goldsmith saw this truth: “Our greatest



glory is not in never falling but in rising every time we fall." Leighton has a beautiful saying: "Adversity is the diamond-dust Heaven polishes its jewels with." It is when defeat is regarded as an education, that the defeated man rises like a star. The pure soul can know no conqueror. And the greatest honour that can be conferred on the pure in heart is to fail in any fight for right, truth, and morality.

This message may sound poor consolation in the ears of the defeated man, but if he could only believe it in the hour of defeat, and hug it to his soul as a message from all the best men of all the ages, he would rise from his despair, *and live again*. No man must be measured by his failures. You must discover what use he made of them. Was he discouraged? Did he slink out of sight? Or did he stagger and baffle you with his courage and reserve power? Humphry Davy said that most of his discoveries had been suggested to him by his failures. Mark the man who rises again after failure. He is a pearl of great price. "Do not be afraid of

defeat," said Beecher, "You are never so near to victory as when defeated in a good cause." Failure can either crush or strengthen. Which shall it do for you? Your failures can be your success. There is only one failure, and that is the man who is false to his highest self. Jesus failed. Savonarola failed. Raleigh, Kossuth, and O'Connell failed. Dante failed. And millions of other men have failed. Milton in his own day was "Mr. Milton, the blind adder who spits his venom on the king's person." And the saddest feature of the world's history is to watch the victims of the world's expediency and diplomacy worshipped as heroes by the descendants of the very men who tried to murder or ruin them. But did these great men fail? Is Jesus "a brilliant failure" to-day? It does not seem so to the present writer, for this "Brilliant Failure" is still able to mend the "Broken Earthenware"!


Let no man despair! Garrison and Phillips had rotten eggs thrown at them. Byron's club-foot and shyness caused him to

pour forth his soul in song. We are also greatly indebted to Bedford jail. Savonarola was excommunicated and burnt by the Pope, and so blind are Church officials to their own sins, that I understand the act is still defended !

Let no man despair ! The foulest cowards are the men who have never risked failure. They befriend and flatter you in prosperity, but stab or ignore you in defeat. But take courage, thou defeated one ! The world's greatest victories have been born of defeat. Columbus died a neglected beggar. But was the Genoese mariner a failure ? Joan of Arc was burned alive at Rouen, without even a remonstrance from Charles VII., who owed her his crown. Was the life of this marvellous woman a failure ? Wallace was quartered on the scaffold. Will Scotland say his life was a failure ?

When will men learn from the facts of history ? When will they learn to read contemporary lives by the lives of the past ? If we were true in our thinking about the Cross, we should not seek our Christian

heroes amongst "great" men, hailed with "loud cheers," but rather amongst those who now carry their crosses and learn to lay them against The Great Cross. Let a breeze of Hope off the Eternal Seas reach the defeated, for be it known that those whom a critical and callous world number amongst the ranks of such may have been weighed in the scales of omnipotent Justice and not found wanting. And let the defeated know that even now they may rise to heights sublime, "where Secret Rolls of Secret Names are kept." With such a faith burning like fire in their hearts, the defeated can still conquer. They can know that there shall be a reversal of human judgments: "The first shall be last and the last first."





## CHAPTER XI

### SECRETS OF GREAT MANHOOD

You will probably be pleased to hear that I am coming to a finish. I shall "sprint" home in one more chapter, but I must trouble you in this one with a few secrets of great manhood. It would be possible to write twenty chapters on this subject, but sentences will now have to take the place of chapters.

I often hear young men say:—"What is the secret of such and such a man's success?" The very question proves that there is a veiled something about the successful man that they do not understand. I will try to lift the veil.

We cannot deal with exceptions, but if you look steadily at the majority of success-

ful men you will become convinced that they are marked by the same characteristic. We have tried to coin words to describe it, such as "Nerve," "Grit," "Pluck," "Perseverance," and so on. There is an indefinable *something* about every man who ultimately succeeds which cannot always be defined, but can fortunately be imitated. I should say, if asked to define it, that it is the capacity to become greater than transient events, indifferent to them, and go on working as if circumstances and events were mere hieroglyphics in the sands of existence, which the waves of Time will roll over and erase. I feel this a poor description. Let us strive therefore to turn up this something in the soil of historic illustration.

Harriet Beecher Stowe once said: "When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems as if you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that's just the place and time that the tide 'll turn." This is a great piece of advice, and it contains roughly the priceless secret. It is the faith of heroic manhood.

When you come "up against it," as they say in America, "stick it, boys." A road always opens in a crisis. Walk down it. Emerson was right: "Accept the connection of events." John Calvin said in volumes what Emerson thus put into five words. Catch hold of the thing that would throttle you, and believe that Almighty God has so made the world that you will be enabled to throttle *it*! You may call Calvin and Spurgeon old-fashioned if you like, but they are not. They are quite up-to-date, although they talk in the language of Canaan instead of mine, which sometimes resembles that of the *Daily Mail*. Calvin, translated into practical philosophy, taught this:—Never give up. Providence mingles life's cup. Faith is a truer word than luck. — The Universe is not a piece of canvas fluttering in cold winds. It is a beautiful Palace in which the Creator holds the stars in His hands and watches the smallest insect pass through its cycle of being. "O! Rest in the Lord." Laugh at Calvin? Thou fool! "This one thing I do," said St. Paul.

Even a mongrel's hold will slip if you use a crowbar. "Tenacity of purpose wearies out opposition and arrives at port." I should be proud if I could say that the last sentence was mine, but it is General Grant's, and it was Grant who settled the fate of the Rebellion, because he had the grip of a bulldog.

You will need the grip of a bulldog if you are to succeed in life, but you need not be a bulldog to grip. You can say "No" to some women and be as gentle as a lady, and those women will admire your strength of manhood. The secrets of great manhood reveal themselves in little things, and above all in monosyllables.

In the International Cross Country Championship, held at Chesham in March, 1914, one man was advised, when half way round a nine and half miles course, "to give it up" because he had not got "an earthly." He refused, came in last, a long way behind, and finished with "a sprint." The crowd cheered him wildly, yes, more enthusiastically than the winner. Had he not run



against tremendous odds to a finish? I raised my hat to the lad and shouted "bravo!" The secret is to keep on when all the other runners in the race have passed you. "I have *finished* my course," said St. Paul, and as he looked round on the things against him he quietly said, "None of these things move me." This is character. This is great manhood. ✓

A Spartan youth once said to his father: "My sword is too short." "Add a step to it, then," was the Father's only reply.

A snapping turtle never releases its grip even when its head is cut off. Give a last pull at the oar with clenched and knit muscles. When small men say "you are done for," get up, catch hold of life with both hands, and laugh at them. When you have falsified all their blind prophecies, they will be the first to ease their consciences by complimenting you and courting your favour. Never take notice of men's judgment of you. It is invariably wrong.

Cultivate persistent and unquenchable optimism. Christ is the master genius in

producing the optimistic music of the Soul. He committed His spirit into the hands of the Infinite when His body was nailed to a cross between two murderers. Think over this! At that moment His real work in this world started. It is a bad sign when a man has no ambition at forty, and longs to die! Life is only just commencing, and his effort to live should increase with the years. The wine is always reserved to the close. Carlyle was practically unknown at forty-five. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was a nobody at fifty. Patrick MacGill is a wonder at nineteen, and Byron died at thirty-seven, but *you* must go on working and storing up until you are fifty before your chance comes. Goethe never saw deeper than when he said that if a man is getting old he should live as if he were starting life again. At forty General Grant was an obscure citizen of Galena. At forty-two he was one of the greatest generals of history. The author of "The Children of the Dead End" surprises the world at this end of life; you are invited to sur-

prise the world at the other end. And you can. Age helps. You must hold your ground to the finish, and push hard. Not pine and straw, but oak and iron are in demand. Grit and effort seldom fail. Trust to no friend's "backing." You yourself possess all the necessary resources. Use them. God will do the rest.

The successful man always believes he can do a thing if he works hard. Given health and the alphabet the whole world will clear a way for you, if you wish. If you wait for luck and legacies, they won't come. There are no "lucky hits" or "lucky dogs." Such a theory of life is foolery. Clear your brains of it, once and for all. Goethe says: "It never occurs to fools that merit and good fortune are closely related." The only thing a doctor can do with a patient who refuses to die is to let him live. The Universe is not an Infinite Chaos. It responds to my will when my will works in harmony with its laws. There is no luck about it. Luck worships at Mr. Micawber's shrine. It waits for something

to turn up. Labour turns it up. And labour is character.

Face what you must with triumphant step and cheerful heart. Fight on without fear. When hopes fail, keep an unfaltering trust that God is God, and, therefore, He Who is just and true will work out His own plans for those who trust in Him. In this way, your Soul, which is always great, will, by strokes of heroism, conquer Fate. If this theory of life is wrong, then the findings of the greatest minds from Homer to Tennyson have never solved its puzzles. But all the gods nod at each other across Olympus. Are they all wrong? The baffling thing to the average mind is Time. Everything takes Time, and it is always out of defeat and failure that success comes. Men who are exceptions to this rule are the freaks and darlings of Providence.

Bulwer Lytton's first novel was a failure, and everything he tried to do for a long time failed. Yet he fought his way to eminence. Harvey laboured eight years before he published his discovery of the circulation of the



blood. He was then called a crack-brained impostor by his fellow physicians. Sothorn, the great actor, said that the early part of his theatrical career was spent in getting dismissed for incompetence. Blucher may have been routed at Ligny yesterday, but to-day you hear the thunder of his guns at Waterloo hurling dismay and death among his former conquerors. The circumstances that oppose, create strength. Opposition always calls forth the powers of resistance.

Study the divinely insane characters of history, men who were regarded as really mad by their contemporaries. "Never despair," said Burke, "but if you do, work on in despair." The extent of your accomplishment in this direction will measure your manhood. A Chinese student, discouraged by repeated failures, saw a poor woman rubbing an iron bar on a stone to make a needle. This example of patience cured him. Virgil worked eleven years on the "*Æneid*." Adam Smith spent ten years on his "*Wealth of Nations*." Euripides spent three days in composing three lines.

Success is to be measured by endurance and powers of resistance.

Advice and experience are valueless if you do not benefit from them. A book such as the one I am now about to close will do you no good, if you do not seriously plan your life in such a way as to act on its principles.

"The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upwards in the night.

"We have not wings, we cannot soar;  
But we have feet to scale and climb,  
By slow degrees, by more and more,  
The cloudy summit of our time."

It has been my privilege to know personally many of the great men of the last fifty years, and I have been impressed with their unanimous opinion that they have done nothing but what every other man might do, if he would only work as they have worked! Amongst all the great men I have had the honour to know intimately, I make no hesitation in saying that Dr. John Clifford, while not being the greatest, is

certainly the most remarkable. He once shocked me by saying: "You can do all I have done if you will work." I never thought he could tell stories! I justified him in my own mind at the time by concluding that his hyperbolic *obiter dictum* was the natural result of his humility. But looking back on that word to me, uttered thirty years ago, I can see a great truth in it. Instead of worse, I ought to have done better than Dr. Clifford. For look at his frail body! How he has had to nurse it! Think of it there in that lace factory in Nottingham, at fourteen years of age, and then watch him as he sustains life for over seventy years, toiling like a horse, and sending his body to sleep at will! I call it a great sight, a matchless inspiration. It is true Lord Morley commenced life by editing a grocer's catalogue, but his body was strong. John Clifford has conducted a miracle before our eyes in so manipulating his physical force as to make its limited character serve him as if he had the body of a Gladstone. And at the back of his

wonderful endurance there has throbbed a soul. You may differ from him, but you must admire him. Two Johns sailed into the twentieth century with flags fluttering to every breeze: John Burns and John Clifford. Let the poorest boy in the world blush in their presence if he dare say that England offers no chance to aspiring talent. Never in the history of the world has greater chance been given to character than that offered by the British Empire to-day. England expects every man to do his duty. Will my reader do his?



## CHAPTER XII

### A "SPRINT" TO A FINISH

I FEEL I have run very indifferently this race of twelve chapters. I have passed many men and things I should have been pleased to stop and examine. It is with a very solemn sense of responsibility I allow this little book to go out into the world. All I can do in closing is to run quickly over certain points I have not touched before.

I have said little about health because there is no need to do so. Every man knows the value of health, and most men are rapidly finding out its secrets. But the Italians have a proverb we seldom hear in England: "Shut the door to the sun and you will open it to the doctor." The sun is the great physician. Drugs are delusion.

Exercise and sunlight are the remedies of nearly all our ills. Muscular Christianity does not mean prize-fighting. It means a study of the laws of health. It means the study of physical preservation. During a recent visit to America it seemed to me that the Americans were all in a hurry. They will have to learn to cure this disease. "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" Nature is never in a hurry. She will bury us all before she will hurry a comet's journey by a second to allow us to see it. She needs no alcohol to stimulate her system. She is self-recuperative. Your views of life will turn on your health. Nature is always at work, and seems quite serene. The sure sign of wisdom in a young man's head is when he is willing to retire early to bed, to rise early in the morning. "Late hours are shadows from the grave." I know three doctors, and have great faith in them: Dr. Smiles, Dr. Exercise, and Dr. Diet. They take the body and mould it into beautiful form. I have little faith in Dr. Drink, Dr. Serious, and Dr. Save-all.

My reader will probably say "Physician, heal thyself," when I beg of him to study the art of preciseness and brevity. That MS. you sent would have been accepted by a dozen Editors if you had "boiled it down" more than one half. That speech or sermon of yours would have been very fine if you had sat down when you had said all it contained. You ruined my prayer-meeting by your recitation! You asked for nothing. You recited! When you came to see me on business you need only have kept me one minute, instead of thirty. I did not wish to be rude, but I shall be engaged next time. Come to the point. Time is valuable. Business is business. I once heard of a grocer's assistant who got "the sack." He would discuss Peter and Paul and Mr. Campbell's New Theology with people who wanted butter and tea. He forgot that Peter and Paul were not on the market for sale. Time is capital. No man has a right to have my money without my consent. What right has any man to act as if my time and money ought to be

laid out entirely for his disposal, and for him to rob me of them, and then complain if I do not supply him with more? I have met these base, ungrateful scoundrels, and suffered at their hands. It is a matter of good taste to say as much as you can in as few words as possible. The more sunshine is condensed, the deeper it burns. The truth never takes many words to tell. Where do we find the essences of the world's wisdom? In its proverbs; and they are always brief. A drunken man once blundered up against Dr. McLaren, the great Baptist preacher of Manchester, and said: "I am not going to get out of the way of a fool." "I will," replied the Doctor.

Build to the stars. There is nothing to stop you if your base is broad and sound enough. Nobody will stop you. Everything turns on the aim. If you only try to shoot just above your house, it is probable that you will injure the spout. We need continually the impulse of the pure ideal. The world will be saved when it has embodied in its corporate life the principles of



Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Demosthenes, having heard Callistratus, was fired with the idea of becoming an orator, although his voice was weak, indistinct, and squeaky. He also had a weak constitution. Given an ideal to which a man devotedly aspires, you cannot predict the limit of his achievements. No man rises above the heights of his habitual thoughts. A contented slave is a degraded man. The certainty of our immortality is written on our highest aspirations.

Study the law of the conservation of your forces, and at the same time their wise distribution. Never put all your eggs into one basket. Napoleon believed that Providence was always on the side of the last reserve. Cromwell was always an unknown quantity to the enemy. He had found the secret of spiritual reserve force. Gladstone often seemed asleep on the front bench of the House of Commons, when suddenly he would jump to his feet, and verbally tear his opponent to pieces. "The silent man is often worth listening to," says the Japanese

proverb. The man who uses his spare moments to store his mind with information can afford to wait. His hour will come.

Keep alive your conscience. Listen to the Inner Voice.

"These rules were writ in human hearts  
By Him who built the day,  
The columns of the universe,  
No firmer based than they."

This Inner Voice is God in the Soul, and no man has ever found this Voice betray him.

May you, as you journey through this world, have courage to look up, not down; out, not in; forward, not behind. So shall your days be full of joy, and their end shall be peace.

In writing this book I have run the risk of criticism as to its journalistic style, its first instead of third person method of composition, its American character of thought, and above all its freedom from preaching at or to young men. I know that many English Church leaders may say: This writer has not touched the one thing needful. He has

not spoken of that regeneration of the heart by the indwelling power of Christ. He seems to know nothing of the Everlasting and Glorious Gospel. He must think that success in life is possible without *that*.

I anticipate these criticisms. I measured them before I commenced the work. I bow to any criticism as to style and method or other defect. But I bow to no imputation that I underrate the reality of conversion, the need of spiritual culture, the value of the Christian Church, the Divinity and Glory of the Person of our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. For thirty years it has been my joy to preach the Evangelical Gospel to young men, but I have found that it does not follow that because a man is good he is therefore competent, and it has been painful to me to watch men of spotless reputation fail to earn a living, because they had not used properly the chest of tools the Creator had created for them. My aim has not been to preach a sermon, but to fire the young men with enthusiasm to make the best of their powers. And if my conversa-

tional and personal method of writing has been the means of arresting their attention, I will be satisfied.

One word, however, I crave, in conclusion. If any young man thinks that the end of life is simply to make money, irrespective of good work done and sound character formed ; if he imagines he can turn a deaf ear safely to the Voice that speaks of Pardon, of Purity, and Peace ; if he supposes that without a change of heart, and a shelter in the time of storm, in the Pavilion of the Most High, he will be able to face the east winds of life with a calm mind—he is mistaken. The Ages and the Sages have all the same message. This world is under moral government. The greatest Voice it has ever heard—coming off the Infinite Seas—is that of Jesus Christ. Slowly but surely the facts of life drive men to know that, as Emerson says, “There is a God.” With Him the heart must be at peace, and in His sight must be pure. Otherwise, dismal shadows gather round the brain, and no stars shine on dark nights. But with a hope in God,



shining like a meteor on the horizon, the world is so made, and life is so formed, that every young man or woman born into it can run and not be weary, can walk and not faint. ✓

good

THE END

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